

STUDIES IN INDIAN HISTORY
OF THE
INDIAN HISTORICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
ST XAVIER'S COLLEGE, BOMBAY

No. 10

THE MAUKHARIS



THE MAUKHARIS

BY

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WITH A PREFACE BY

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M A D R A S

B. G. PAUL & CO., PUBLISHERS

12, FRANCIS JOSEPH STREET

1934



P R E F A C E

Before Fleet published his *Gupta Inscriptions*, the history of the Gupta Empire, nay of the whole of Northern India from the 3rd to the 7th century, was completely blank. The study of those inscriptions opened a new field of research which was soon explored in its different aspects. Gupta history is well known to-day, and the history of some of the dynasties connected with the Guptas has also been written. The researches of Dr. S. Krishnaswamy Aiyangar and Mr. K. P. Jayaswal in the history of the Vākāṭakas of Berar are an eloquent testimony to the increasing interest that has been aroused in the study of the ancient history of Ancient India.

Yet there are a number of dynasties of that period whose history still remains obscure. The early dynasties of Nepāl, the Licchavis of Vaśālī, the Nāgas of Northern India, the meteoric but not in the least to be despised Hūras, the Kshatrapas and Vallabhis of Śaurāśtra, the dynasties whose representatives were defeated by Samudra Gupta are only a few instances of the various points which still remain unexplored in spite of the praiseworthy efforts of a few scholars in a limited field. Mr. Jayaswal for instance in his recently published *History of India* has made a highly laudable attempt in this respect. The history of the Bara Śivas and of the Ābhīras is there treated at length, besides that of the Vākāṭakas already mentioned above. Mr. Jayaswal moreover offers the result of his research in the Sanskrit drama *Kaumudīmanohara* in connection with the Magadha-kula, apparently a new dynasty that suddenly springs forth from the dark ages of ancient history.

But Mr. Jayaswal seems to forget a dynasty whose importance is beyond doubt in the making of the history of North India. The Maukharis, a family that, as Bāṇa stated, was "at the head of all royal houses" of Āryavarta, deserve a well-documented history. Mr. Edward A. Pres the

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author of this work has written this history, the need of which was felt long ago. For carrying out his task to a successful end, Mr. Pires has with unusual energy studied Sanskrit, the language in which the Maukharī sources are written. For the same purpose he undertook a tour through the ancient Maukharī dominions, on which I had the pleasure of accompanying him.

Mr. Pires has well understood the importance of the *Maukharī* family. He has for the first time exposed the relations between the Maukharī Kings and the first Gupta Emperor, by the identification of the *Magadha-kula* of the *Kaumāradīnabodhava* with the Maukharī family. This identification, against which no serious argument can be adduced, is a satisfactory explanation of the appearance of a new dynasty in that Sanskrit drama. The history of the relations between the Maukharīs and the Chōlā Kings of Southern India is another interesting chapter in which the author of this work complements the invaluable researches of Mr. Aravamudan. But the most interesting portion of Mr. Pires's work is that which refers to the internal history of the period and to the cultural work of the Maukharīs. In this connection the recent discoveries made at Nālandā by the Archaeological Department have been of great assistance to him.

The work of Mr. Pires was submitted to the Bombay University as a thesis for the M.A. degree. It is to be hoped that this will not be the last work of this young scholar who has stepped so successfully into the realm of Indian history.

H. HERAS, S. J.

Bombay, December 1st. 1933.

INTRODUCTION

The history of the Maukharis, though in its own times one of the most influential ruling families in Aryavarta, is a much neglected chapter of Indian history. It is a chequered history extending from the third to the eighth century A. D.—a history of vicissitudinous fortunes and sudden ups and downs, during which the grit and the powers of endurance of these Kshatriya princes were put to several severe tests, with what results may be examined in the following pages.

I must confess at the very outset that a reconstruction of the history of the Maukharis entails no end of difficulties and this for just one simple reason. Judging from the enormous influence which these princes enjoyed and the fact that they held the field for well-nigh five centuries one would expect to find a sufficiently large number of their records. But in reality this is not the case, and the student of Malkhari history cannot but be content with hardly a dozen inscriptions left by this family for his perusal.

It is a comfort, nevertheless, that supplementary evidence is available—though again to a very limited degree—in the realm of tradition and literature. The most important of such evidence is that afforded by the *Kaumudimahotsava* and the *Harsha Charita*.

No history of any dynasty of rulers can be fully understood without a visit to the principal localities connected with its rule. However, if it is not sometimes possible to undertake a comprehensive tour of the entire country under the sway of that dynasty, a visit should be paid at least to the find-places of the inscriptions of these rulers, for the cost and the trouble that such a journey must needs entail are amply compensated for by the added interest and the increased pleasure that one soon discovers in one's subject. This was what actuated me to undertake such a tour under the

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guidance of my affectionate *guru*, Rev. Fr. Heras, to whom are due my sincerest and most grateful thanks. Though we were not fortunate enough to light upon any new Maukharī epigraphs during our tour, we were able to study the topography of the country over which the Maukharis once held sway, and to inspect the few Maukharī remains that are yet to be found. Thānesar, Kanauj, Jaunpur, Pātarputra (rather Pātarā, G. p. 2), Ahyon, Dev-Butarān, and the Barābar and Nālandā hills were the most important visits included in our tour. The visit to the Lucknow Museum enabled us to inspect the Maukharī coins that are deposited there, as well as the Maṇḍāḍā inscription of the reign of Śāaavarman the Great which has been removed to this Museum from its original site of discovery.

My thanks are also due to another *guru* of mine, Mr. H. V. Gortar of St. Xavier's High School, who has initiated me into the elements of the Saṅskṛta language, and by reading with me through the inscriptions of the Maukharī Kings has made me realise the necessity of a knowledge of Saṅskṛit to appreciate and to better understand all the implications of these old epigraphs.

E. A. P.



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PART I

Historical Introduction

Pre-Maukhari History of Magadha

The Magadha country has a history extending far into the early centuries before the Christian era, "a history which is undoubtedly unique, at any rate unrivalled, not only in India, but perhaps, in the whole world"¹. Long before the historic times of Chandragupta Maurya, powerful and magnificent sovereigns like Brihadratha² and the peerless Jarā-sandha³ wielded the sceptre in Magadha. It was in Magadha that the nucleus of the first empire was formed by the Śaiśunāgas, so that Magadha played the same part in ancient Indian History that Wessex played in the annals of Pre-Norman England. It was about the middle of the sixth century B. C. that Bimbisāra, the fifth member of the Śaiśunāga dynasty and the real founder of the Magadhan imperial power, mounted his ancestral throne, which he occupied for two and fifty years⁴. It was during his reign that Vardhamāna Mahāvira and Gautama Buddha, the two great religious leaders of ancient India, preached their respective doctrines to the people of Magadha. Besides Buddha himself, the two

¹ Samaddar, *The Glories of Magadha*, p. 1

² *Mahabharata*, Sabha, XVII. Cf. also *Harivamsa*, CXII, 659. The eldest Brihadratha founded a famous dynasty in Magadha. Twenty-two kings of the line are said to have ruled one after another.

³ *Mahabharata*, Sabha, XIX

⁴ *Mahavamsa*, p. 12.

next great Buddhist teachers, Tissa Moggaliputta and Upagupta, also flourished in Magadha, whilst Āśvagosa, the founder of Mahāyana Buddhism, also came from there.

Bimbisāra's capital in Magadha was at Girivraja or Rājagṛha (the modern Rājgir); but though Huen Tsang says that the new town was built by Bimbisāra, his story cannot be correct, as Bimbisāra lived and died in the old city.¹ He annexed to Magadha the kingdom of Anga or East Bihār and acquired a portion of Kāśī by a matrimonial alliance with Kosala. He was, however, murdered by his own son Ajātasatru, who succeeded him on the Magadhan throne. A notable achievement of this monarch was the annexation of the powerful state of the Licchavis of North Bihār, and it has been supposed that he carried his victorious arms even to the foot of the Himālayas, so that the whole region between the hills of Chota Nāgpur and the Himālayas came under the suzerainty of Magadha.² Need was now felt of a capital more centrally located than Girivraja. Accordingly his son Udayi laid the foundation of the city of Pataliputra at the confluence of the Ganges and the Sone, on the site where a fortress had already been built by his father to commemorate his victories.

The last of the Śaśunāgas, Mahānandin, was dethroned about the year 371 B. C., his deposition being the exploit of his minister, Mahāpadma Ugrasena, who afterwards usurped the throne and established the Nanda dynasty.³ The Purāṇas describe him as an *ekarāt* or sole monarch who vanquished all the contemporary Kshatriya dynasties, thus effecting the unification of a considerable portion of India, including

¹ *Sumangala-Vilasini*, I, 137 (P. T. S.) Cf. Sen *Raja-Griha in the Buddhist Scriptures*, p. 2.

² Moraes, *The Kadamba Kula*, p. 1, thinks that Bimbisara and Ajatasatru also effected the conquest of the Kuntala country.

³ *The Cambridge History of India*, I, p. 313, cites the Purāṇas to prove that the Nandas represented no new family, but were the direct descendants of the Śaśunāgas, the last two of whom bear names indicating their connection.

perhaps even the provinces of Kosala, Kuntala¹ and Kalinga.² Mahapadma was followed on the throne by his eight sons, the last of whom was Dhana. The Nandas are reputed in Indian history for their enormous wealth, spoken of not only by the Greek and Chinese historians, but also by indigenous writers. Prof. S. K. Aiyangar points out an interesting passage in a Tamil poem regarding the wealth of the Nandas "which being accumulated first in Pātali, hid itself in the floods of the Ganges"³.

The Nanda dynasty, however, was supplanted by that of the Mauryas, its imperial possessions passing into the hands of Chandragupta, once a commander-in-chief of the Nanda fighting forces. A Taxilian Brahman named Kautilya is supposed to have sided Chandragupta in this *coup d'état*. The reign of Chandragupta lasted from about 320 to 297 B.C. and it was a reign fraught with momentous events in the history of Magadha. It was he who "shook the yoke of servitude from the neck of India" by making war on the generals of Alexander. One of the most important contests was that with Seleukos who crossed the Indus, determined to invade the plain of the Ganges; but he was repulsed and defeated by Chandragupta and compelled to conclude a humiliating treaty, by which he surrendered four provinces of his empire, embracing the greater portion of modern Afghanistan and Baluchistan. An important consequence of this treaty was the establishment of political relations between Syria and Magadha. Envoys from Syria and Egypt resided

¹ A passage in the *Katha-sarit-sagara*, p. 21, refers to the camp of king Nanda in Ayodhya, which seems to imply that Kosala was included within his dominions.

² A few inscriptions of the 11th and the 12th centuries (E. C., VII, Sk., 225, 236) recount the tradition that the Nandas held sway over this part of the Deccan.

³ There are two passages in the Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela which speak of Nandaraja in a manner that suggests that the Kalinga country also came under the sphere of Magadha influence.

⁴ S. K. Aiyangar, *Beginnings of South Indian History*, p. 89.

⁵ *Justin.*, p. 142.

at Pataliputra and one of them Megasthenes has left behind a vivid portrait of the Indian people and an account of the institutions of the period, which exhibit in no uncertain manner the genius of Chandragupta as an administrator. The Śravana-Belgoḷā inscriptions establish a connection between Chandragupta and the Kuntala country, where the great emperor is said to have spent the last years of his life.¹ He was succeeded by his son Bindusāra, who successfully maintained the integrity of the empire. It is also possible that he effected the conquest of the Deccan.

The most renowned of the Maurya line however is Aśoka, the son of Bindusāra. In his early years, Aśoka's one thought, like that of every typical Magadha monarch, was to extend the confines of his kingdom; accordingly some eight years after his accession he invaded and conquered the powerful kingdom of Kalinga. But never did victory end so strangely; the misery and bloodshed that resulted from this sanguinary campaign made Aśoka the victim of feelings of *anuśochanam*, profound remorse and sorrow; and from that moment he determined to sheathe the sword. Aśoka's conquest of Kalinga is a landmark in the history of Magadha, and of India. Ended was that career of annexation and aggrandisement, ushered in by Bimbisāra when he subjugated Aṅga. The Kalinga war inaugurated a new era—an era of peace and concord, of social progress, of missionary activity and simultaneously of political inaction and, possibly, of military decadence during which the martial spirit of imperial Magadha was gradually sinking for want of exercise. The age of *digvijaya* was over, and the age of *dharma-vijaya* was about to begin. Aśoka had become an *upāsaka* “a lay worshipper”², and he now organised a powerful system of missions to propagate his *dharma*, which was not Buddhist, as has been very often supposed, but universal—a *dharma* “common to all religions, though based upon Hinduism and

¹ E.C., VIII, Sb, 1, 17, 54, 40, 108; E.C., III, Sr. 147, 148.

² Heras, *Asoka's Dharma and Religion*, Q. J. M. S., XVII, p. 273.

influenced by Jainism ⁴. He promulgated the famous *dharma lipis* or precepts on religion, commonly known as the Law of Piety. His was indeed a paternal rule, and beneficence was its main characteristic, but though the dream of an united India under a single ruler wielding unquestioned authority came very near realisation in his time, yet the military stagnation into which Magadha sank after the Kalinga war was responsible in the first instance for the disintegration of the Maurya empire, which disintegration set in immediately after his death and was accomplished less than half a century later. Aśoka's successors could not have been competent rulers, and very little is known about them. One of them, Daśaratha, his grandson, has left some records in the Nāgārjunī Hills in the Gayā district of Bihār. These inscriptions show that Daśaratha continued the patronage which Aśoka bestowed on a sect of Vaiśnava ascetics called Ājīvikas.

The last of the imperial Mauryas was Brihadratha who was murdered in or about 185 B C by his general Pushyamitra, who usurped the throne of Magadha and founded the dynasty of the Śuṅgas. The Śuṅgas were probably of Brahmanic origin, and they brought an orthodox revolution in literature and Hindu society ⁵. The available evidence tends to show that Magadha under the Śuṅgas still possessed an empire, but it was an empire greatly reduced in extent since the days of Aśoka. Under Pushyamitra it extended to the river Narbadā in the south and probably to the Beās in the north. His son Agnimitra, whilst still the crown prince, won a victory over the King of Berār. But the Śuṅgas could not hold at bay the aggressive Khāravela, King of Kalinga, when with the aid of Yajna-sena Śātakarni, he penetrated into Magadha and apparently forced Pushyamitra to sue for peace ⁶. Kālidāsa in his drama *Mālavikāgnimitra*, mentions the *aśvamedha* of Pushyamitra, in fact he refers to two such horse sacrifices, and Mr. Jayaswal thinks that as he was de-

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

⁴ Samaddar, *The Glories of Magadha*, p. 25, note.

⁶ Raychaudhury *Political History of Ancient India* p. 237

feated by Khāravela, evidently after his first sacrifice, he had to re-establish his imperial position as soon as possible. The Greeks under Menander also threatened Pāṭaliputr, Pushyamitra's capital; but they were repulsed. During the reigns of Agnimitra and his successor Vidisa (the modern Besnagar in Eastern Mālvā) seems to have been the centre of the Śuṅga power. Other localities that stand out prominently in Śuṅga history are Gonardā, where the greatest literary council of the time, Pataliputr, first saw the light of day; and Bhārhi where the famous stūpa and railing were constructed, which have immortalised the Śuṅga in Indian history.

In 72 B. C. the Śuṅgas were succeeded by the Kanyas, a dynasty founded by the Śuṅga minister named Vāsudeva, who murdered the last Śuṅga sovereign Devabhūti. They ruled, however, for only forty-five years, being overthrown in about 28 B. C. by a king of the Sātavāhana dynasty of Dakṣiṇāpatha.

The Sātavāhanas are often described as the Andhras and identified with the Āndaras spoken of by Ptolemy as a powerful nation, and also mentioned by Pliny¹. The Purāṇas nevertheless, give them the appellation of *Anabrahmītyas* or the "servants of the Andhras"². Whether the Andhras had any real connection with Magadha is highly problematical. The truth seems to be that their only claim to a place in his annals must have been based on a conquest which procured for them the paramountcy previously enjoyed by Magadha³; for so far as rank and fame were concerned, Magadha now ceased to enjoy any. On the contrary, during the Kushān period, Pāṭaliputra itself was attacked; and perhaps, though it is very doubtful, during the reigns of Kuvishka and Vāsudeva, Magadha was included within the Kushān dominions⁴. The Āndhra dynasty died out in 225 A. D., but after the

¹ *J. B. O. R. S.*, X, p. 205.

² Cf. Rice, *Mysore and Coorg*, p. 15.

³ Wilson, *Vishnu Purana*, p. 473.

⁴ Cf. *The Cambridge History of India*, I, p. 318.

⁵ Cf. Samaddar, *The Glories of Magadha*, p. 26.

Kushān period no records are available which can tell us who ruled over Magadha till shortly before the advent of the Guptas, when, as we find from the Chandrāvalli inscription of the Kadamba Mayūrasarmma¹, the Maukharis held sway in Magadha. This brings us to the threshold of Maukhari history. Some important names that are readily conjured up in connection with the *Magadha-dēśa*, and which it would not be irrelevant to mention here, are those of Kauṭilya or Chāṇakya (to whom is attributed the *Arthaśūtra* which is a valuable compendium of political science), Āryabhatta, the great astronomer, Upavarsha and Varsha, Pāṇinī and Piṅgala² Vararuchi and Patañjali³, and Kālidāsa⁴.

¹ *Archaeological Survey of Mysore, Annual Report, 1929, p. 50.*

² Piṅgala was the *guru* of Binasara's sons and specially of Asoka

³ Patañjali refers so often to Patahputra as to lead one to conclude that at least a part, if not the whole, of his *Mahabhasya* was written there. Cf. Chapter I, 15, III, 2-123.

⁴ Kalidasa's description of the king of Magadha in the *Raghuvamśa*, Canto IV, 21-24, is really very remarkable.

CHAPTER II

The Origin of the Maukharis

The Harāhā inscription of Iśānavarman¹ acquaints us with the origin of the Maukharis. It gives to these rulers the distinctive epithet of *Mukhara*. *Mukhara* in Sanskrit may be used to express various meanings, but why these rulers should have been called Mukharas cannot be determined with any degree of certainty. According to Vāmana and Kaiyata, the two famous expositors of the Pāṇinian system of grammar, who flourished probably about the seventh and the thirteenth century A. D. respectively, the term *Mukhara* is a patronymic which signifies 'the descendants of Mukhara'. *Mukhara* therefore, must have been the *ādipurusha* or the first member of the family to bring it into light and prominence, thus meriting the distinction of having the family called after his own name. Nevertheless we have no evidence² at hand to decide whether *Mukhara* was his proper name or merely an attributive name, though it does not appear unreasonable to assume that *Mukhara* was a surname given to the man for his being the 'leader' of the family, or because he had distinguished himself by fighting in the forefront of the armies which he led into battle. Such a view seems to be very probable, for it is usually such characteristics that go to make a man the founder of a dynasty. Bāṇa also evidences the

¹ E I XIV p 111

fact that Mukhara was a distinguished personage, when in the following statement he places him at the head of a family. "Soon Gambhira, a wise Brahman attached to the king, said to Grahavarman: 'My son, by obtaining you Rājyaśrī has at length united the two brilliant lines of Pushpabhūti and Mukhara, whose worth, like that of the Sun and the Moon houses, is sung by all the world to the gratification of wise men's ears' " ¹. Pushpabhūti, we know, was an ancestor of Harsha; in like manner, and in all probability, Mukhara was an ancestor of Grahavarman. It is strange, however, that Mukhara does not obtain mention in any of the other inscriptions that have up to date come to light; but this can be explained by saying that he was only a remote ancestor. In another passage of the *Harsha Charita*, Bāṇa makes Rājyaśrī's father exclaim: "In general too, though a bridegroom may have other merits, the wise specially incline towards good family. Now at the head of all royal houses stand the Mukharas, worshipped like Śiva's footprint, by all the world" ². That the Maukharis were not upstarts, but of good descent, is also borne out by two more passages, one in the Harāhā inscription of Īśānavarman which states that the hundred sons of Aśvapati "were conspicuous on account of their excellences" ³; and the second in the invocatory verses of Bāṇa's *Kādambarī* which mentions these princes as "crowned Maukharis" who honoured Bhatsu, the revered *guru* of the poet ⁴.

Pandit Hirananda Sastri thinks that the author of the *praśasti* of the Harāhā inscription appears to connect the Mukharas with the solar race. The inscription says that the Mukharas or Maukharis were the descendants of the hundred sons whom king Aśvapati obtained from Vaivasvata. Pandit Sastri identifies Vaivasvata with Manu, "who is supposed

¹ *Harsha Charita*, p. 128

² *Harsha Charita*, p. 122

³ *E. I.*, XIV, v. 3, p. 119.

⁴ Ridding, *Kadambari*, p. 1.

to be born of the sun and to preside over the present age' ¹. It is doubtful whether this deduction of the solar race rests on assured ground. On the contrary it appears to be rather strained. The *Harsha Charita*, I think, gives us a very important clue in favour of the contention that the Maukharis were descended from the *Soma Vamśa* or the lunar race, for says Bāṇa: "*Sōma Sūrya-vamśāviva Pushpabhūti Mukhara-vamśau*" We know, however, from the termination of their names (e.g. Adityavardhana and Prabhākara-*vardhana*) and from their records that the Pushpabhūtis belonged to the solar race and were regular worshippers of the sun; therefore the Maukharis must positively have belonged to the lunar race. *Vaivasvata*, therefore, from whom *Aśvapati* obtained his hundred sons, may be identified with *Yama* ² and not with *Manu*.

Though the termination *varman* of the Maukhari names correctly indicates that they were Kshatriyas, the termination *vardhana* or *bhūti* of Harsha's family is misleading. Several historians have wrongly taken them to be Vaiśyas ³. But more probably they were Kshatriyas, for we find that Grahavarman, the son of Avantivarman Maukhari, was the husband of Rājyaśrī, the sister of Harshavardhana. This union, it is true, might be explained by supposing that Prabhākara-*vardhana*, the enlightened monarch that he was, did not take into any consideration the difference of caste when he gave his daughter in marriage to Grahavarman. But the necessity of such an explanation does not really arise. Another objection to the view that the Vardhanas of Thānesar were Kshatriyas would be that Hiuen Tsiang calls Harshavardhana a *Fei-she*, or Vaiśya ⁴. But General Cunningham contends, and I agree with him, that the caste name on *Fei-she* must represent a Bais Rajput, and not a Vaiśya ⁵. This would

¹ *E I*, XIV, p. 111

² Cf. Law, *Some Kshatriya Tribes of Ancient India*, p. 225

³ Cf. Vaidya, *History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, I, p. 61.

⁴ Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, I, p. 209.

⁵ *A.S.I.R.* XV p. 164.

as so accord he says with his relationship to Śraditya the Kshatriya King of Malwa.

The name Aśvapati is applied in history to several persons, but the one who is most familiar is the Aśvapati who was the king of Madra¹ and the father of Sāvitrī of *Mahābhārata* fame². If the Harāhī inscription refers to the Aśvapati of Madra as the founder of the Maukharis, these princes must have originally belonged to the north western part of India where Varāhamihira has located the Madras³. It is evident from the Allāhābād Pillar inscription that Madra lay by the side of the territory of the Yaudheyas⁴, and occupied the central portion of the Punjāb⁵.

Descended as they were from king Aśvapati's hundred sons, it would not be erroneous to suppose that the Maukharis constituted a large and populous clan rather than a single family. Some of the clan evidently followed peaceful pursuits, whilst others were destined to win laurels on the battle-field. The Maukhari clan, however, seems to have been an ancient one. If the surmise be accepted that the term Maukhari was known to Pāṇini, who must have flourished not later than the fourth century B.C., the antiquity of the Maukharis would be indubitable, and, as I have said, from the scholiasts Kaiyata and Vāmana it appears very probable that the term was known to Pāṇini and also to Patañjali. The scholiasts give three illustrations of *gotrāvayavas* (small gotras or clans) —Pāṇikya, Bhaunikya and Maukharya—under the aphorism that explains the formation

¹ In the *Matsya Purana* reference is made to King Asvapati of Sakala in the kingdom of the Madras (Chap. 208, St. 5).

² *Mahabharata, Vanaparva*, Chap. 291-298, pp. 509-523. (Maharaja of Burdwan's edition).

³ Kern, *Brihatsamhita*, p. 92.

⁴ Mazumdar, *Corporate Life in Ancient India*, p. 272.

⁵ The capital of the country was the famous city Sangala or Sakala, the Sagala of the *Milinda Panha*. The territory of the Madraka tribe is still called the *Madradesa*, the country between the Ravi and the Chenab rivers. Cf. Smith *J. R. A. S.*, 1897, p. 889.

of the words in the *shyan* affix¹. As neither Mukhara nor Pushpabhūti, the ancestor of Harsha, have as yet emerged into the light of history, it is suspected that both of them are pre-historic and eponymous personages². The great antiquity of the Maukharis is also attested to by the clay seal secured by General Cunningham at Gayā which has inscribed on it in Mauryan Brahmi characters the Pāli legend *Mokhalinam*. *Mokhalinam* is evidently a Prākṛit equivalent of the Sanskrit *Maukharīṇām*, which is the derivative of Mukhara, and means 'of the Maukharis'³. The seal probably denotes, as is the opinion of Mr. Jayaswal, that the Maukharis were a political (republican) community originally, but they must have been bereft of their power in the third century B. C., as there is no room for a second rate political community in the neighbourhood of Gayā at the time of the Mauryas⁴.

¹ *Panini*, IV, 1 79.

² Aravamuthan, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

³ *E. I.*, XIV, p. 114.

⁴ Aravamuthan, *op. cit.*, p. 80, note.

CHAPTER III

The Various Maukhari Dynasties

From the Harāhā inscription of Išānavarman we can immediately conclude that the Maukharis were very enterprising rulers, but this can also be inferred from the fact that there was more than one branch of the family. The finds of the Maukhari records prove that the dynasty consisted of at least three groups. The inscriptions of one branch of the dynasty have been discovered in the Jaunpur and Barā Bānki districts of the United Provinces, whilst those of the second group have been disclosed in the Gayā district and in the adjoining localities of Bihār. We shall speak of the former as Harivarman's line of Maukharis, and of the latter as Yajñavarman's line, as these two princes are the first of each line that we hitherto know anything about. A third dynasty appears to have ruled before both Harivarman's and Yajñavarman's lines.

It would perhaps be correct to suppose that Yajñavarman's line of Maukharis was a collateral branch of Harivarman's line, but to say that they ruled in the Bihār region as viceroys¹ of Harivarman's dynasty is too far-fetched. The mistake consists in reckoning these two dynasties as contemporaneous, which is far from the truth. Yajñavarman's line, as we shall presently see, ruled earlier than Harivarman's line. Their records in the Barābar and Nāgār-

¹ C R XXVI p 210

junī Hills are a testimony to this. The letter of these inscriptions are older in form even than those of the Harāhā inscription. The tri-partite ya, which is a characteristic of the Kushān and the early Gupta alphabets¹, is used promiscuously along with its later developed form in the Harāhā inscription. But in the inscriptions of Anantavarman only the tripartite ya is to be noticed which is a sufficiently clear indication that they are of considerably earlier date. Kellhorn is of opinion that the Nāgājūmī Hill inscriptions for palaeographic reasons cannot be placed later than the first half of the sixth century². Indrajī and Bühler place them in the fifth century³. Though I am not inclined to follow General Cunningham who places Yajñavarman's dynasty in the fourth century⁴, I should like to bring them as near as possible to the Guptas⁵, and should place them in the first half of the fifth century but what transcends my comprehension is how Mr. C. V. Vaidya could believe Yajñavarman's dynasty to be a later branch belonging to a date later than that of Harsha⁶. Again, even supposing that the two dynasties of Yajñavarman and Harivarman were contemporary, it is difficult to understand how Mr. Aravamudan can say that Yajñavarman's line was the stronger of the two knowing from the records that his was a feudatory family of petty chieftains, whereas on the other hand Harivarman, the first named prince of the other dynasty was already a Mahārāja, as is attested by the Harāhā inscription. Yajñavarman's dynasty consisted, as far as we know, of only three members Yajñavarman, Śārdulavarman and Anantavarman. One inscription of Anantavarman has been found in the Barāhāt

¹ Bühler, *Indian Palaeography*, p. 48.

² *E. I.*, VI, p. 3

³ *I. A.*, XI, p. 428.

⁴ *A. S. I. R.*, III, p. 137

⁵ Cunningham thinks that these Maukharis probably succeeded the Guptas in A. D. 319 (*A. S. I. R.*, III, p. 135). But this is unintelligible. The Guptas themselves came into power in 319-320 A. D.

⁶ Vaidya, *H. M. H. I.*, I, p. 34.

Hill, and two others in the Nagarjunī Hills, and it is in the Barābar Hill Cave inscription that Śārdulavarman is explicitly stated to be a *sāmantachudāmaṇi*, which indicates the exact status of these Maukhari kings. These princes therefore wielded only an insignificant power, but there is no warrant for calling them, as Mr. Vaidya does¹, a subsidiary line of the Maukhari lineage. Though neither the Barābar nor the Nāgārjunī inscriptions throw any light on the extent of sovereignty of these chiefs, it is apparent that they belonged originally to Aṅga or Bihār, where these inscriptions have been found.

Mr. Raychaudhury speaking of Yajñavarman's dynasty and of the one that succeeded it—the dynasty of Harivarman—says that “a new power was rising in the Ganges valley which was destined to engage in a death grapple with the Guptas for the mastery of Northern India”². But the Maukhari power was not at all a new power, for before Yajñavarman's dynasty of Maukharis, we know of another line of kings who ruled in Magadha. There may have been many princes who belonged to this dynasty, but only two names have come down to us, and these are only to be found in a single manuscript of a Sanskrit drama, the *Kaumudīmahotsava*, discovered by Mr. Ramakrishna Kavi. They bear the name of Varman³, and are called in the drama the *Magadhakula*. They flourished in the time of Chandra Gupta I, and were in all probability a branch of the Maukharis. That a branch of the Maukharis ruled in Magadha before the imperial Guptas held sway there is evinced by the Chandrāvalī inscription of Mayūraśarma⁴, the Kadamba king of Banavāsī, who is sometimes inaccurately supposed to have been a contemporary of Samudra Gupta⁵. Mayūraśarma, who is the

¹ *Ibid*, p. 330.

² Raychaudhury, *History of Ancient India*, p. 371.

³ We know of no Maukhari, however, who bore a different name. The name Varman evidently was not a mere honorific suffix, but a family name.

⁴ *Archaeological Survey of Mysore*, Annual Report, 1929, p. 50.

⁵ Cf. Moraes, *The Kadamba Kula*, p. 16.

founder of the Banavāsi Kadambas, should be placed even earlier than Chandīa Gupta I. He is stated, in the Chandrāvalli inscription, to have defeated the Maukharis, evidently when the latter were still independent and not yet overwhelmed by the Guptas. As to whether the Maukhari king defeated by Mayūraśarma belonged to the dynasty of Sudaravarman, we have no clue what-so-ever. But as Mayūraśarma cannot be placed more than about forty years before the foundation of the Gupta dynasty, it is not likely that he belonged to a different dynasty from that of the *Kaundamahotsava*.

Yet another succession of Maukhari kings is known to us from the Asirgadh copper seal¹ and the Harāhā inscription. This is the line of Harivarman. Harivarman's dynasty succeeded that of Yajñavarman but we do not know if Harivarman himself succeeded the last representative of Yajñavarman's dynasty. The Nālandā seals and the Jaunpur, Apsad and Deo-Baranāik inscriptions also throw valuable light on the history of these princes. They were the contemporaries of the later Guptas, but at present we possess no means of determining the countries which these two contemporary dynasties governed. Yet there is sufficient evidence to indicate that the territory of the Varmans was in the Eastern portion of Magadha, whilst the Guptas held sway in Western Magadha. Their frontiers, nevertheless, must have been constantly shifting, advancing or receding with the vicissitudes of war. The dynasty of Harivarman seems to have acquired considerable power in Northern India under one or two of its members². As we shall see the Maukharis were strong enough to hold at bay, nay, even to chastise the turbulent hordes of the Hunas³, they were powerful enough to vanquish the hosts of the Āndhras; this power even en-

¹ *J. R. A. S.*, III, p 337. Here, however, amongst other mistakes the word Maukhari is misread Houvari.

² Mr. Raychaudury thinks that they were also probably feudatories at first (*H. A. I.*, p. 371.)

³ In this not trivial business they received the support of the Rajas of Thanesar.

abled them to overthrow the king of distant Gujarat. We get an inkling of this power of the Maukharis in a passage of Bāṇa's *Harsha Charita*, where King Prabhākaravardhana pays them a tribute saying, "At the head of all royal houses stand the Maukharis", and in the *Kādambari* where the highest praise that Bāṇa could pay to his *guru*, Bhatsu, was to say that he was 'honoured by crowned Maukharis' ¹. This line of Maukharis must have extended its dominion up to Delhi, perhaps even to the banks of the Sutlej.

After the death of Grahavarman Maukhari, his brother-in-law, Harshavardhana, the Thānesar Rājah, ruled the Maukhari territories, as a regent for his sister Rājyaśrī, the widow of the Maukhari King, but he gradually took unto himself all the authority of a monarch, Rājyaśrī retaining nothing but the semblance of control. After his death, however, in spite of the confusion and chaos that followed, the Maukharis came into their own, and Pūṇavarman regained the Magadhan throne. Besides Pūṇavarman we know of only two Maukhari princes after Harshavardhana — Bhogavarman and Yaśovarman—the three being separated from each other by a wide break of years. Evidently there were others who filled in these gaps, but no vestige of their rule seems to have endured. As Aravamuthan opines, they must have been only minor potentates ². This, however, cannot apply to Yaśovarman, who is known to have held extensive sway and to have possessed great power.

¹ Ridding, *Kādambari*, p. 1.

² Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis, and the Sangam Age*,
p. 30

Kshatravarman

In all likelihood Kshatravarman is the earliest Maukharī whose name has come down to us; and it is to Bāṇa that we are indebted for this piece of stray information though it is not of any great value in the reconstruction of Maukhari history. In the sixth chapter of the *Harsha Charita* we find an interesting passage in which Skanda Gupta, the commandant of Harsha's elephant troop, warns his master against "the universal confidingness, so agreeable to the habits of his own land and springing from innate frankness of spirit"; and though he approves the idea of Harsha avenging the murder of his brother, loyal devotion leads him to recapitulate some historical instances of untimely death due to "mistaken carelessness" and the "despicable character of vile men". One of these instances is that of the Maukhari Kshatravarman¹, who in his foolish fondness of *man-khas* (troubadours)² welcomed some who were his enemy's emissaries and who successfully availed themselves of the king's folly to treacherously assassinate him³.

¹ Another instance recorded by Bana is that of Śrutavarman, "whose secret a parrot heard". From the termination *varman* it appears as if he too was a Maukhari, but we cannot vouch for such a conclusion merely on that score.

² Bhau Daji, *Harsha Charita of Bana*, J.B.B.R.A.S., X, p. 44, translates *Mankhas* as praise singers, which seems to give a better inkling of the mean designs of these men than the word 'troubadours'.

³ Bana, *Harsha Charita*, pp. 191-194.

The *Harsha Charita* however assigns no date to this unfortunate incident. But several attempts have been made to gauge approximately the period to which this Maukharī king belongs. Cunningham merely says that he must have preceded Pūrṇavarman, who was the contemporary of Harshavardhana¹, and there can be no doubt about that. But if Cunningham implies that Kshatravarman was Pūrṇavarman's immediate predecessor, it seems that he errs, for Hiuen Tsiang, who speaks of Pūrṇavarman, would not have left unmentioned such a glaring fact as the murder of Kshatravarman. Aravamuthan, on the other hand, because the list of disasters cited by Skanda Gupta includes the Maurya Brihadratha and the Śuṅga Sumitra, both of whom are attributed to the second century B. C., thinks that Kshatravarman belongs to an age much earlier than the other Maukharis, and therefore much earlier than the fifth century A. D.² He does not attempt, however, to assign his reign to any determinate period. But the *Harsha Charita* though it does not give us the date of the murder of Kshatravarman probably affords us a clue by utilising which we might arrive at a somewhat approximate date. Immediately after the instance of Kshatravarman's assassination, Skanda Gupta cites the murder of a Śaka king, an adulterer punished by Chandra Gupta who presented himself in his mistress' dress. It seems likely, therefore, that Kshatravarman flourished some time before Chandra Gupta. In fact, as has been observed before, the Maukharis actually dominated Magadha before Chandra Gupta usurped the throne from them³. This information can be gleaned from the Sanskrit drama *Kaumudīmahotsava* and from the Chandrāvalli inscription of the Kadamba Mayūraśarma, who is recorded therein to have defeated the Maukharis. Could this Mayūraśarma be the one responsible for the

¹ A. S. I. R., XV, p. 165.

² Aravamuthan, *op. cit.*, pp. 30, 81

³ The Andhra dynasty died out in 225 A. D. and it is not improbable that the Maukharis began to rule as independent princes in Magadha increasing in power with the passage of years

death of Kshatravarman? We have no evidence — this point. For all we know, Mayūraśarmma sent some minstrels as ambassadors to the court of Kshatravarman in order to put an end to his life by a treacherous *coup de main*. To assail and vanquish the Maukhari forces would then be an easier affair.

Mayūraśarmma, however, does not appear to have occupied Magadha, and even if he did, not for a very long time; for shortly after the death of Kshatravarman, king, Sundaravarman of the *Kaumudīmahotsava* is seen on the Magadhan throne¹.

¹ Though it seems likely that Kshatravarman was a member of the *Magadha-kula* of Sundaravarman, there is no epigraphic or literary evidence to corroborate this conclusion. For this reason I have treated him separately from the members of the *Magadha-kula*.

PART II

THE MAGADHA-KULA

of the

KAUMUDIMAHOTSAVA

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CHAPTER I

Sundaravarman

A very precious gem of Sāṅskṛit literature, precious not so much as a literary piece, but because of the valuable historical data contained in it, is the drama *Kaumudīmahotsava*, recently edited and published by Mr. Ramakrishna Kavi and Pandit S K Ramanatha Sastri Mimamsacharya¹. The drama consists of five acts², and the author is unknown; but she was evidently a woman. Her name is not explicitly mentioned in the manuscript, and we must await the discovery of another manuscript to learn her name, and perhaps to find that she is one of the poetesses famous in our anthologies. Mr. Kavi, however, in his introduction thinks that the name of the authoress was probably Vijjikā. Mr Jayaswal's impression, on the other hand, is that the second verse of the drama contains her name, which he takes to be Kishorikā. Krishivala, in his opinion, is her father's name³. Neither is the evidence of the manuscript definite on the title of the drama. There might have been another name.

¹ It has been edited as No 4 of the *Dakshinabharati Sanskrit Series*, and published from 366, Mint Street, Madras (1929). Mr. Kavi and his companions discovered the manuscript on palm leaf in British Malabar during one of their tours in search of manuscripts.

² In print the drama covers fifty (8vo) pages, which Mr. Kavi has prefaced by a five-page introduction in English.

³ A. B. O. R. I, XII, p. 50, note.

Several characteristics of the period to which the drama belongs can be gleaned from the drama itself. We learn from it that the period witnessed an orthodox revival (p. 36), that Hindu gods and goddesses were in the ascendant, that women became orthodox nuns (p. 38), that the book of Dattaka was still studied by learned courtezans at Pāṭaliputra (p. 37), that the stories of Avimāra (p. 22), and Udayana (p. 4), were familiar to, and popular with the audience, at least dramas on them as well as on Śaunaka and Bāndhumati, and that the art of painting too was patronised (acts V & VI).

As Mr Jayaswal thinks, the drama is a work of the Gupta period, judging from its literary style and characteristics¹. The style of the drama, however, is simple, peculiar to the Bhāsa school. There are no signs of striving for effects by means of long and ornate *śamāsas* or far-fetched figures of speech. The verses as well as the prose passages are direct and artless. *Nāndi* is omitted as in so many southern texts. Nevertheless the drama seems to be nearer Kālidāsa's time than that of Bhāsa; but it does not follow from this, that because there exists some similarity of language between the authoress and Kālidāsa, that there was any borrowing between them, for expressions current on the stage and used by one dramatist will be invariably and similarly used by other contemporary or nearly contemporary authors. That the drama did not acquire a permanent place in literature can be easily explained. It was really meant only for the occasion of the *Kaumudīmahotsava* and must have been composed at a very short notice. Moreover the plot of the drama being the history of a prince who was not destined to win any glory, the work sank into oblivion together with the prince.

The drama tells us that king Sundaravarman, because he had no children, adopted one Caṇḍa-sena. But although Caṇḍa-sena had thus voluntarily become a member of the Magadha family, he had the impudence of contracting a marriage with the Lichchhavis, the bitter enemies of the

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

Magadha dynasty who are called by the authoress by the despicable name of *Mlechhas*. Not only that, but he also kept a look-out for a nice opportunity to attack Pataliputra¹, the Magadha capital, and when the opportunity presented itself he laid siege to the city. Here the words *svayam Magadha-kulam vyapadiṣannapi* are important. Although Caṇḍa-sena did not belong to the Magadha family by birth he had proclaimed himself its member by adoption. The drama tells us that he was a *Kāraskara*². These *Kāraskaras* were lowly placed³, and in the drama itself their low status is hinted at by the remark 'how royalty for such a caste'. Caṇḍa-sena had resided long in Magadha and his *Kāraskara* community had now come to be looked upon as a caste. During the battle Sundaravarman had an opportunity of slaying the rebel, but he refrained from such an act considering that Caṇḍa-sena after all was his foster-son. He merely thrust him headlong into the midst of the Lichchhavi ranks, who were evidently fighting on his side. The reason of Caṇḍa-sena's hostility and rebellion was the birth of a son, Kalyāṇavarman, to king Sundaravarman, by which he feared he would lose all claims to his adoptive father's throne.

Two reasons make Mr. Jayaswal feel confident that this Caṇḍa-sena is no other than the Gupta Emperor Chandra Gupta I. In the first instance it is very likely that Caṇḍa-sena dropped the name Sena and assumed the name Gupta, in order to give himself a dynastic title and in imitation of the illustrious name of Chandra-Gupta Maurya; and he had not to borrow the name from very far. Gupta⁴ was his own

¹ The city is alternatively called Kusumapura and Pushpapura.

² *Kaumudimahotsava*, IV, 6. p. 30. There is no reason to be surprised that Canda-sena was a Karaskara. As Mr. Jayaswal says (*A. B. O. R. I.*, 1930, p. 55), a *kritaka* son could be, like any other kind of adopted son, an *asavarna* boy, and therefore a Kshatriya could adopt a Karaskara.

³ According to Baudhayana, *Dharmasutra*, Ch. I, the Karaskaras had their own locality.

⁴ His father's name Ghatotkacha was not joined with Gupta.

grandfather's name, as we know it from inscriptions. Chandra Gupta, therefore, became his real title, his original name being Caṇḍa-sena (unless the manuscript has inadvertently substituted Caṇḍa for Candra). The identification proffered is upheld by Caṇḍa-sena's *sambandha* or alliance with the Lichchhavi clan², spoken of in the drama itself. That the rise of the Guptas was due in a large measure to Chandra Gupta's marriage with Kumāradēvi, the princess of the Lichchhavi family, is a well-known fact in history, proved by the Gupta inscriptions and corroborated by a series of Samudra Gupta's coins³. The Lichchhavis disappeared from the neighbourhood of Magadha when Vaishali became a Gupta acquisition in the time of Chandra Gupta II⁴. As Sundaravarman and his son Kalyāṇavarman flourished before the disappearance of the Lichchhavis from the neighbourhood of Magadha, they must have lived in the days of Chandra Gupta I and Samudra Gupta.

Though the drama does not say that Sundaravarman belonged to the Maukharī dynasty, it is very probable that he was a member of the family. In the first place the dynasty of Sundaravarman is called the Magadha-kula⁵, and Magadha, we must remember, was the homeland of the Maukharis. Again, we shall see, that all the Maukharī names known so far end in *varman*, and so do the names of Sundaravarman and Kalyāṇavarman. Moreover, we are told in the drama that Sundaravarman and Kalyāṇavarman were Kshatriyas⁶ and

¹ The Gupta records mention his natural parentage, which according to Hindu law he had not lost, when he became Sundaravarman's *kritaka* or foster-son.

² This Lichchhavi-Gupta matrimonial alliance is a proof, though not a strong one, of the low status of the Guptas.

³ These coins bear on the obverse standing figures of Chandra Gupta and his Queen, and on the reverse a figure of Lakshmi with the legend "*Licchavuyah*". Vide Allan, *Catalogue of the Coins of the Gupta Dynasties*, Plate III.

⁴ Raychaudhury, *History of Ancient India*, p. 334.

⁵ *Kaumudimahotsava*.

⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 3, 32, 33.

the Maikharas too were Kshatriyas. But were there any Maikharis ruling in Magadha as early as in the fourth century? Till but a couple of years ago we only knew of one Maikharī, Kshatrarman, who could be placed earlier than the line of Yajñavarman. But the recently discovered Chandrāvallī¹ inscription of Mayūrasarmma² has revealed the fact that the Maikharis ruled in Magadha in the time of the early Kadambas.

The primary purpose of the Chandrāvallī inscription³ seems to be the same as that of the Myakadoni inscription⁴ of Pulumavi and the Talagunda inscription⁵ of Śāntivarman, i. e., to record the construction of a reservoir of water, this time, by Mayūrasarmma of the Kadambas. The defile in which the boulder containing the inscription is situated, is very conveniently placed for the construction of a dam, which could impound the rain water poured by both the monsoons on the hills lying to the south of Chitaldrug. Excavations to the north of this place have also revealed that in the same direction towards which the inscription faces, there was in the times of the Śātavāhanas, a flourishing town in which several lead coins bearing the names of Gotamiputra, Pulumavi and other later Śātavāhana rulers have been collected. Mayūrasarmma, we can therefore say, merely follows the example of Pulumavi in recording his deed. Another purpose of the inscription is to record the victories of the Kadamba hero over his neighbours of the Traikuta, Ābhira, Pallava, Pariyātrika, Sakasthāna, Sendraka, Punata and Maikharī⁶ kingdoms.

¹ The site of this ancient town of Chandrāvallī according to local tradition is the valley of Mulegondi to the west of the fortified hill of Chitaldrug in the Mysore State.

² The only other inscription known so far which might be ascribed to Mayurasarmma is the Malavallī pillar inscription, part II (*E. C.*, VII, Shikarpur, p. 264). His name, however, is not mentioned in this inscription.

³ *Archaeological Survey of Mysore*, Annual Report, 1929, p. 54.

⁴ *E. I.*, XIV, p. 153.

⁵ *E. I.*, VIII, p. 24.

⁶ Maikharī is written as Mokarī in the inscription.

The characters in which the inscription is written belong to the class of later Southern Brahmi, known as the *cave characters* of the variety seen in the later Śātavāhana inscriptions. In point of similarity they come nearest to the Myakadoni inscription of Pulumavi which the Chandrāvalli inscription resembles in many ways¹. The language is evidently Prākṛit, but there is a tendency to Sanskritise. The inscription would therefore seem to belong to the last days when Prākṛit still held its place as the state language of South India. Sanskrit comes into general use in the fourth century, and as Dr M. H. Krishna remarks, "if Mayūra had belonged to the fourth century, it is difficult to explain why he, who is described as a Brahman learned in the Vēdas, should have preferred Prākṛit to Sāṁskṛit"². I would assign the inscription to about 283 A. D. for the following reasons —

Dr. Sukhtankar has ascribed the Myakadoni inscription to the reign of Pulumavi II whose regime lasted from 135 to 163 A.D., for the mere reason that the reigns of both Pulumavi III and Pulumavi IV lasted only for about seven years, whereas the inscription belongs to the eighth regnal year³. But such a difficulty can be easily brushed aside if we remember that it is a very common practice in South Indian usage particularly to mention the expired year instead of the current, whilst the Purāṇas most probably mention the completed years. Possibly Pulumavi IV ruled for seven complete years and expired in his eighth year, very soon after the Myakadoni inscription was set up. Moreover, the second century would be too early a date for Mayūraśarmma, and therefore the Myakadoni inscription might very reasonably be assigned to the reign of Pulumavi IV (c. 218 to c. 225-226 A. D.). There is still a difference of over half a century between the two inscriptions, but I find it very difficult to bring the reign of Mayūraśarmma earlier than 285 A. D.

¹ *Archaeological Survey of Mysore, Annual Report, 1929, p. 52.*

² *Ibid.*, p. 57.

³ *E. I.*, XIV, p. 154.



The kingdoms mentioned in the inscription of Mayūraśarmma help us in fixing its date. Though the Ābhira kings Īśvarasena and Īśvaradatta appear to have reigned in the first half of the third century, after the withdrawal of the Śātavāhanas from the districts round Nasik, it was really in 249 A. D. that the Ābhiras rose to a powerful position and consolidated their territories. The Traikutaka era was identical with that of the Ābhiras, and it is doubtful whether the Traikutakas existed before that. The Pallavas, the Sendrakas and the Punatas had already erected their kingdoms over the spoils of the Śātavāhanas, and this was not possible before the middle of the third century. Mayūraśarmma's victories over the Śakas, the Pariyātrikas and specially the Maukharis signify that they were still independent dynasties that had not yet been overpowered by the Guptas. The Maukharis, however, could not have been an independent power after 320 A. D., when Chandra Gupta ascended the Magadhan throne, and Mayūraśarmma must have defeated them before that date, somewhere about 280 A. D.

Even more than the kingdoms mentioned, the omissions in the inscriptions are significant. The Śātavāhanas, the Guptas, the Gangas and the Vākātakas are all not surprisingly left unmentioned; the Śātavāhanas, because no trace of their empire could have existed in 283 A. D., the Guptas, the Gaṅgas and the Vākātakas because these powers had not yet been established.

It is commonly believed that the eightieth year of an unknown era, to which the Halsi plates of Kākusthavarmma, the great-grandson of Mayūraśarmma, are ascribed, refer to an era reckoned from the commencement of Mayūraśarmma's reign. For reasons which I am giving below I date the reign of Kākusthavarmma from c. 370 to c. 400. But the Halsi plates were issued during the reign of Raghu, when Kākusthavarmma was the Yuvarāja of Palāśica. Thus the first year of Mayūraśarmma's reign would fall eighty years before that date, i. e. somewhere about 285 A. D. But Mayūraśarmma does not seem to have been crowned when he set up the Chandrāvalli inscription, as he claims no royal titles

therein. The inscription, nevertheless, seems to have been set up after the completion of his conquests, but perhaps a couple of years before his coronation 283 A. D. might therefore be determined as the most satisfactory date for this inscriptions.

The Talagunda pillar inscription¹ helps us to fix the reign of King Kākusthavarmma. The inscription says that Kākusthavarmma by means of his daughters raised up the family of the Guptas and other kings. In the words of the inscription itself, "the sun among kings by the rays, viz. his daughters, raised up the beds of lotus, viz. the Gupta and other kings...". I think it will not be incorrect to suggest that the historic embassy of Chandra Gupta II Vikramāditya to the Kuntala king, mentioned in the *Śringāra-prakāśika* by the poet Bhoja², probably took place in the reign of this king and that the object of the embassy was the settlement of a family alliance with the Kadambas. "This embassy", says Fr. Heras, "appears to be one of the most suggestive events in the history of the Gupta Empire"³. The Kadamba Empire, during the reign of Kākusthavarmma, had "reached the acme of its greatness"⁴. "The reign of Kākustha was the heyday of the Kadamba power"⁵. It is no matter for surprise, therefore, that Chandra Gupta II, himself a powerful monarch at the time, the undisputed ruler of Eastern Mālhwā and Gujerāt⁶ and the absolute sovereign of Saurāshtra⁷, whose dominions extended across the Indus, and whose influence pervaded even the northern extremity of India, as is attested by the acceptance of the Gupta Samvat in the kingdom of Nepāl⁸, should have endeavoured to gain

¹ E. C., VII, Sk, 176.

² Cf. K. Balasubrahmanya Ayyar, *A Study in Kalidasa in Relation to Political Science*, Madras Oriental Conference, p. 6.

³ Heras, *Relations between Guptas, Kadambas and Vakatakas*, J. B. O. R. S., XII, p. 458.

⁴ Moraes, *The Kadamba Kula*, p. 25.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁶ Fleet, *G. I.*, pp. 25, 32, 36.

⁷ Bana, *Harsha Charita*, p. 194; Thomas, *Gupta Records*, p. 15.

⁸ Cf. *I. A.*, IX, p. 173 ff; XIV, p. 345.

the friendship of so powerful a monarch as Kākusthavarmma. Moreover it must be borne in mind that Chandra Gupta at this time was dreading an impending invasion of the Hūnas¹, and with this dark hour in view he embarked on a policy of dynastic marriages. One such alliance he concluded with the Vākātakas by marrying his daughter Śrī Prabhāvatī Gupta to Rudrasena II. According to Mr. Vincent Smith this marriage between Rudrasena II and Śrī Prabhāvatī Gupta took place about 395 A. D.². A second such alliance was proposed to the Kadamba King Kākusthavarmma through the imperial ambassador Kālidāsa, and the Talagunda pillar inscription seems to say that Kākustha accepted the proposal and gave away one of his daughters to Kumāra Gupta I, the son of Chandra Gupta II. Considering all this, Anantadevi of the Bhītārī seal inscription and the wife of Kumāra Gupta I, therefore, seems to have been a Kadamba princess³. Kākusthavarmma may be said to have been a contemporary of Chandra Gupta II, and to have ruled from c. 370 - c. 400 A. D. Hence supposing, as Fr. Heras does, that Kālidāsa's embassy took place in 390, the marriage of Kumāra Gupta I with the Kadamba princess must have taken place a couple of years later in 392 A. D.

It is interesting to note that there are two passages in the Balghat plates of Prithivisena I⁴ that have been erroneously construed by some historians. The plates say that Prithivisena II was the son of Narendrasena, born of the Mahādēvi Ajjhitabhattārīka, a daughter of the lord of Kuntala. The plates also tell us that Harendrasena was the grandson of

¹ The Hunas actually invaded the empire towards the close of Kumāra Gupta's reign. Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 55, vv. 10, 11, 12, 14. Cf. Divekar, *Pusyamitras in Gupta Period*, A. B. O. R. I, 1, pp. 99-103.

² Smith, *The Vakataka Dynasty of Berar*, J. R. A. S., 1914, p. 326.

³ It is also possible that the Kadamba princess was wedded to Kumāra Gupta's younger brother, Govinda Gupta, whom Dr. Bloch has identified with Krishna Gupta, the ancestor of Adityasena of Magadha. Cf. R. D. Banerji, *The Chronology of the Imperial Guptas*, A. B. O. R. I, 1, p. 71.

⁴ E. I, IX, p. 271, vv. 30-31.

Rudrasena II and Śrī Prabhāvatī Guptā¹, herself a daughter of Chandra Gupta II². Mr. Moraes takes this king of Kuntala to be the same Kākusthavarmma who gave one of his daughters in marriage to one of Chandra Gupta's sons³. But there is absolutely no warrant for such an assumption. The inscription merely calls him the "lord of Kuntala". According to the chronology adopted by me, Mugeśavarmma seems to have been the father of Ajjhitabhāṭṭāṅka. Besides, if we suppose Kākusthavarmma to have been Ajjhitā's father, we plunge into a difficulty from which it is hardly possible to extricate ourselves. We find one daughter of Kākusthavarmma married to Chandra Gupta's son, and a second daughter married to his great-grandson. Moreover there is too wide a gap between the marriage of one daughter with Kumāra Gupta in 392 A. D., and the marriage of the second with Narendrasena in 445 A. D.

According to my chronology Kangavarmma seems to be the "lord of Kuntala" defeated by the Vākāṭaka Pravarasena I⁴, whom Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar has shown to have been a contemporary of Chandra Gupta I⁵. We are told in the Talagunda inscription that he was forced to wage many and expensive wars. As the phrase "terrible wars" would suggest, these wars often proved unsuccessful.

All these considerations, as we have seen, enable us to fix the date of the Chandrāvalli inscription as c. 283 A. D., which means that the Maukharis were ruling in Magadha at this time. This furnishes us with one more reason to believe

¹ Monsieur Jouveau-Dubreuil supposes that the marriage of Narendrasena took place in 445 A. D. (*Ancient History of the Deccan* p. 100).

² Cf. S. Krishnaswamy Aiyangar, *The Vakatakas in Gupta History*, *Q. J. M. S.*, XV, p. 155.

³ Moraes, *The Kadamba Kula*, p. 26.

⁴ Ajanta Cave inscription of Prithivisena II, *A. S. of W. I.*, IV, p. 125, v. 8.

⁵ S. Krishnaswamy Aiyangar, *The Vakatakas in Gupta History*, *Q. J. M. S.*, XV, p. 158; *The Vakatakas and their place in the History of India*, *A. B. O. R. L.*, V, pp. 37-39.

that Sundaravarman of the Magadha kula was a Maukharī¹. We cannot say, however, in what relationship he stood with Kshatravarman; but it looks very probable that he succeeded Kshatravarman to the Magadhan throne. His reign must have been a long one, for, as the *Kaumudimahotsava* says², he died on the battlefield of old age and exhaustion, in defence of his capital Pātaliputra, which had been besieged by Chandra Gupta and his Lichchhavi confederates. His Queens committed suicide after his death³.

¹ The Puranas, however, which close in the Gupta period, make no mention of Sundaravarman's family.

² *Kaumudimahotsava*, p. 30.

³ *Ibid*, p. 30.

CHAPTER II

Kalyanavarman

We have observed some of the disastrous consequences of the battle of Pātaliputra. Sundaravarman, the Magadha King, fell fighting in defence of his capital, and the several queens he left behind him all committed suicide. His son Kalyāṇavarman¹, who was no more than a little boy, had to flee the country. Some devoted companions, however, among whom was his nurse Vinayamdhari, took him away beyond the frontiers into the forest². In Magadha the usurper Chandra Gupta with the help of his Licchhavi allies ascended the throne. He soon began to extend the limits of his dominions till they included the whole of the Gangetic valley as far as Allāhābād and Oudh, and assumed the sovereign title of Mahārājādhirāja³. Meanwhile Kalyāṇavarman grew up on the lake Pampa at Vyādha-kishkindra⁴, where patiently bided his time lying in wait for an opportunity to win back his kingdom. Nor did his prime-minister Mantra

¹ The Nidhanpur copper plates of Bhaskaravarman, king of Kamarupa, mention a Kalyanavarman as one of this king's ancestors. This Kalyanavarman's father, however, is called Balavarman and his queen Gandharvati, and therefore he cannot be identified with the Kalyanavarman of the *Kaumudīmahotsava*.

² *Kaumudīmahotsava*, p. 31.

³ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 28.

⁴ *Kaumudīmahotsava*, p. 3.

Gupta and his commander in chief Kuñjaraka give up hopes of restoring him to his heridom; and they had not to wait long, for a supreme opportunity soon offered itself, when Chandra Gupta was obliged to leave his capital and to go out with his army on an expedition to the frontiers of his kingdom in order to quell a rebellion of his *pratyanta-pālas* or frontier governors¹, "among the Śabarās and Pulindas on the frontier of Magadha"². How hard Mantra Gupta and Kuñjaraka were toiling for the return of their prince to his capital can be gauged when we realise that these two officers were the cardinal forces responsible for stirring up the revolt among Chandra Gupta's frontier-governors³. During Chandra Gupta's absence from Pātaliputra, Mantra Gupta had a secret conference with the *Paura-Janapadas*, who favoured the reinstatement of prince Kalyāṇavarman⁴. Accordingly he was summoned to the capital (through an urgent messenger) where he immediately obtained *mahābhīṣeka* coronation⁵, for *adhirājya*⁶ at the Su-Gāṅga Palace⁷. For political strength Mantra Gupta also arranged an alliance with the king of the Surasena Janapada⁸, the Yādava Kīrtisena, who held his court at Mathurā⁹. His daughter Kīrtimatī was brought to Pātaliputra and married to Kalyāṇavarman, the *purohita*

¹ *Kaumudimahotsava*, p. 29.

² *Ibid*, p. 10.

³ *Ibid*.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 41.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 35.

⁷ The mention of the Su-Ganga Palace at Pataliputra and the historical reference to the Su-Yamuna Palace at Kausambi (p. 4) are natural in this drama, but the reference to the Su-Ganga in the *Mudra-Rakshasa* in connection with the *Kaumudimahotsava* is forced. It therefore appears, as Mr. Jayaswal says, (*A. B. O. R. I.*, 1930, p. 52), that Viśakhadatta had this play about Kalyanavarman before him and was probably competing with it.

⁸ *Kaumudimahotsava*, pp. 8, 34, 49.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 40-43.

from Mathura representing the king. In the beginning of the fifth act, Chandra Gupta is said to have been struck or killed (*nihatah*). But the drama does not say at whose hands he met his death—whether it was one of Kalyāṇavarman's party or one of the frontier-governors who struck the fatal blow¹. Nevertheless, Kalyāṇavarman is credited with having uprooted the *rāja-kulo* of Chandra Gupta.

Kalyāṇavarman's story goes no further. The '*saṃvṛtā-charita*' of the new king inevitably stops when it reaches the celebration of the *kaumudīmahotsava*, on which occasion this drama urgently composed by the lady dramatist was staged at Pātaliputra. Kalyāṇavarman's life story and personality hardly afford any scope for a dramatic plot. There is very little of the hero in him. He did not recover his lost throne through his own efforts; rather, he was restored to the throne by the Pura-Janapada, when Chandra Gupta was absent from his capital. Nor is the real hero of the story, the prime-minister Mantia Gupta, given his due share of heroism and importance, which is justifiable in view of the fact that the drama had to be enacted before the king and his entire court. Nevertheless the dramatist displays a deft hand in creating a romance, for the newly wedded couple had seen each other only once before the marriage. But her description of the young Queen's beauties fails to impress, evidently because it is the portrayal of a woman by a woman garbed in the current diction of the stage.

It does not seem probable that the Lichchhavis could have allowed Kalyāṇavarman to remain long in possession of the Magadhan throne. They had to look after the interest of their *dauhitra* and ward, Samudra Gupta; and very probably, even before the Gupta army could return from the frontier-provinces, Kalyāṇavarman was defeated and either killed or forced to beat a speedy retreat from Pātaliputra. Such a hypothesis immediately explains why Kalyāṇavar-

¹ *Ibid.*, Act. V

² Chandra Gupta, however, does not seem to have returned to his capital.

man's name does not figure in the Allahabad Pillar in the list of the rulers subdued by Samudra Gupta. Where Samudra Gupta is credited with having uprooted Achyuta¹ and Nāgasena, the words "unassisted, with the force of the prowess of his arms"² are added; the Kota prince is also said to have been "captured by his armies"³ Kalyāṇavarman, therefore, as he probably never came into conflict with Samudra Gupta himself, is not included in the list of his victories. That the name of Kirtisena, the father-in-law of Kalyāṇavarman, is also missing, is explicable if we bear in mind that Kirtisena, who was a contemporary of Sundaravarman, was probably an old man at the time of Kalyāṇavarman's marriage and accession, and that he might soon have passed away. Nāgasena, whose defeat is mentioned in the inscription, might have been his son.

It is sometimes believed that a civil war followed the nomination of Samudra Gupta to the throne of Pātaliputra, and that Kācha was one of the brothers who envied Samudra Gupta's appointment and waged war against him⁴. This assumption of a civil war on the death of Chandra Gupta would explain why Kalyāṇavarman's name does not figure in the conquests of Samudra Gupta, for he might have been ousted from Pātaliputra by one of Samudra Gupta's brothers who took possession of the city and set himself up as a rival emperor. The civil war for succession would again explain how Kalyāṇavarman was able to stay in Pātaliputra as long even as to be able to celebrate the *Kaumudīmahotsava*. Thirdly, the disturbed state of the country would also explain why Samudra Gupta had to face so many enemies as Achyuta, Nāgasena and the Kota prince immediately after his accession. Evidently these princes wished to avail themselves of the prevailing lawlessness to enhance their power.

¹ Smith tries to make Achyuta the king of Ahichchatra in Panchalā, in modern Rohilkhand (*J. R. A. S.*, 1890, p. 876).

² Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 12.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Cf. Heras, *A. B. O. R. I.*, IX, pp. 83-90.

Nevertheless, though this theory of a civil war is quite plausible, the identification of Kācha as a brother of Samudra Gupta does not seem to rest on assured ground. Mr. Jayaswal's identification of this Gupta king with Rama Gupta, a brother of Chandra Gupta II, appears more probable¹.

If it is true that Kalyāṇavarman was actually defeated by Samudra Gupta in person, the victory must have been recorded in line 13 of the Allāhābād Pillar in those ten unintelligible syllables that follow the names of Achyuta and Nāgasena. In this case Achyuta, Nāgasena, Kalyāṇavarman and the Kota prince must all be referred to a battle at Pātaliputra, which city is alluded to in the fourteenth line of this inscription. But Chandra Gupta had selected Samudra Gupta in supersession of his elder brothers because he alone appeared competent to restore the fallen fortunes of the family, and to guide its destinies safely through the dark and critical hour through which it was passing; nor did Samudra Gupta fail to live up to the expectations of his father and of all the ministers and members of the assembly who were present at the dying king's bedside, when he nominated him his successor.

Mr. Jayaswal identifies the Kota-*kula* as the family of Kalyāṇavarman², and therefore the Kota-*kulajam* captured by Samudra Gupta as Prince Kalyāṇavarman himself. In this case "*Kota-kulajam*" would mean that Kalyāṇavarman was descended from the Kota family on his mother's side. On his father's side he was evidently a Maukhari³.

There are two Varmans mentioned in the list of the Aiyavarta kings subdued by Samudra Gupta: Balavarman

¹ A. B. O. R. I, XVIII, pp 17-36

² A. B. O. R. I, XVII, p. 55.

The late Pandit Bhagwanlal Indraji sought to identify the Kota clan with the tribe named Koda, mentioned in an inscription near Sopara in the Thana district, Bombay, and with the Kada of the Kadasa coins found near Saharanpur in the North West Provinces (Indraji, *Sopara and Padana*, p. 18).

³ Could Kota be synonymous with Maukhari? We have no means of investigating into this.

and Chandravarman but neither of them had any connection with Kalyāṇavarman. Balavarman was obviously the king of Kāmarupa mentioned in the Nidhanpur plates as an ancestor of Bhāskaravarman¹. Chandravarman may be, and probably ought to be, identified with the Mahārāja Chandravarman, son of Mahārāja Siddhavarman, lord of the Pushkara Lake, who has recorded a brief dedicatory inscription on the Susunia Hill, in the district of Bānkura, seventeen miles S. S. W. from the Rāṇiganj railway station².

¹ *J. A.*, XLIII, p. 96

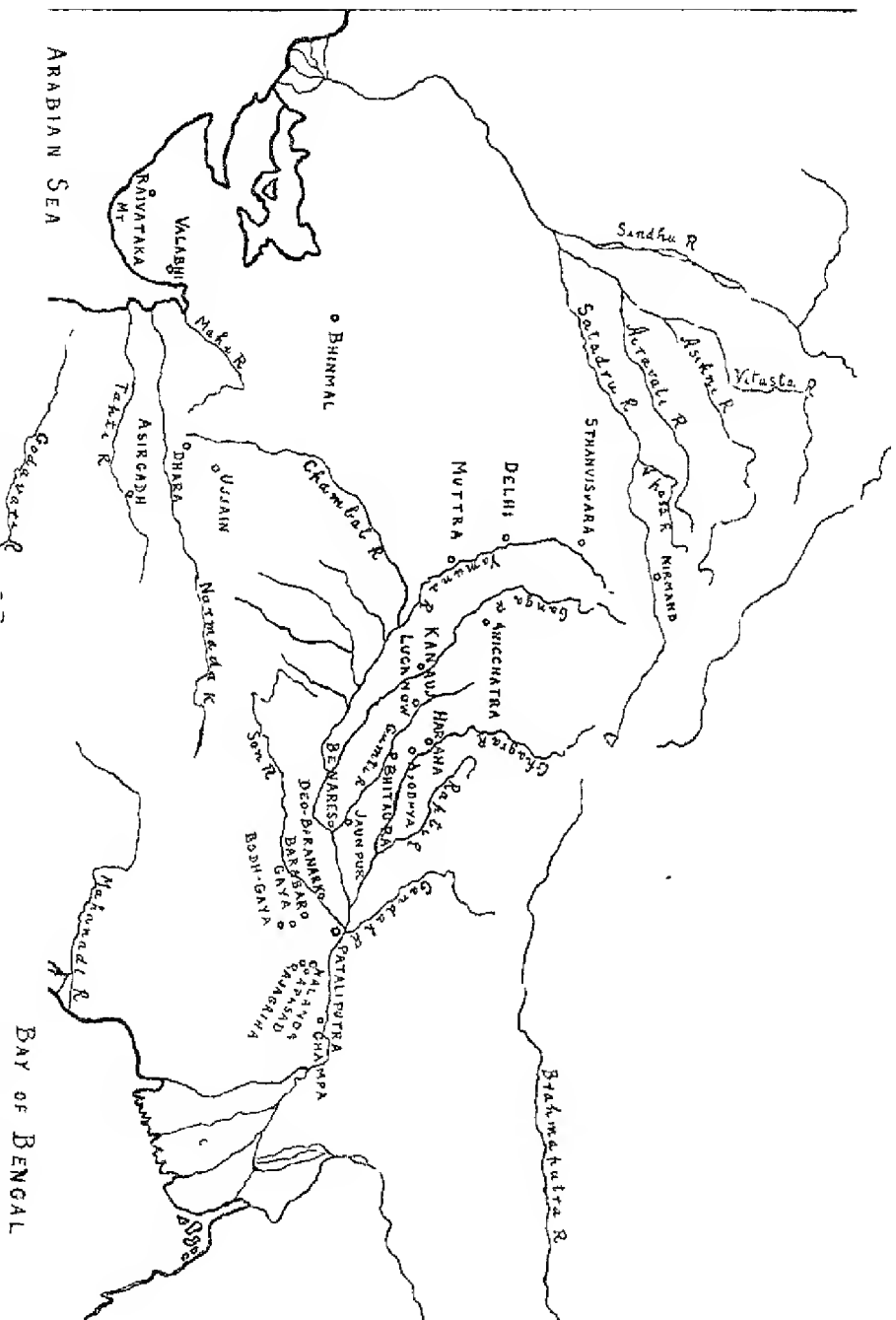
² *J. A. S. B.*, 1895, p. 177 ft.

PART III

'The Line of Yajñavarman

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ARABIAN SEA

BAY OF BENGAL

Yajñavarman

The first dynasty of whom any useful epigraphic evidence is extant is the line of Yajñavarman. The Barābar and Nāgārjunī Cave Inscriptions recount just three generations of the dynasty, the three members in their order of succession being Yajñavarman, Śārdulavarma and Anantavarma. Whether these princes were the direct descendents of either Kshatravarman or Sundaravarman, we can hardly say from the evidence available, but that they were connected with Magadha is indisputable. A very debatable question, however, is that of the date of their rule, for all their three inscriptions, written in characters of the same type, are unfortunately undated. Cunningham seems to be correct when he states that, from the style of their alphabetical characters, they must have reigned before 500 A.D.¹, but it is difficult to understand what he means by saying that they probably succeeded the Guptas in 319 A.D.². What seems possible is just the reverse: that when the Guptas succeeded Sundaravarman's dynasty on the throne of Pāṭaliputra, the Maukharis were relegated to a corner of Magadha, the Gaya district, there to rule as petty and subordinate chieftains³. Cunningham de-

¹ Cunningham, *A. S. I. R.*, III, p. 135.

² *Ibid.*

³ Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 57, believes that these Maukharis belonged to Anga or Bihar

fixes the rule from 319 to 400 A. D. but one feels inclined to adjust these dates and place these rulers from about 400 to 475 A. D.¹ There must have been others who preceded them, but they were entirely subordinate to the Gupta emperors and nothing is known about them. It was only in the time of Yajñavarman, perhaps, and of his successor Śārdulavarman that this branch of the Maukharis began to grow in importance and power. Śārdulavarman, in fact, enjoys the appellation *Mahāsāmanta*, whilst Yajñavarman is merely called a *sāmanta*. Two out of the three inscriptions also use the term *nripa* or king for both Śārdulavarman and his father, and though, as Aravamuthan observes, the word *sāmanta* is more specific² and probably denotes the exact status of these rulers, the use of the term *nripa* testifies to their gradually enhancing influence.

One Nāgārjunī inscription calls Yajñavarman a glorious and illustrious king³, the other applies to him the epithet 'renowned'⁴. These are evidently indications of his increasing authority and his vigorous personality, but it is very doubtful whether Yajñavarman was at any time absolutely independent. Both the inscriptions, however, highly extol the personal accomplishments of Yajñavarman. Both are unanimous in declaring that Yajñavarman was a skilled and formidable warrior almost cradled in the art of warfare. He was the veritable "abode of (all) the dignity of one of the warrior caste"⁵. All kings admired his military genius and came to him eager to be instructed in the duty of those who belong to the warrior caste⁶. Yajñavarman presumably was an eminent statesman as well, as one of the inscriptions declares in a somewhat exaggerated phraseology that he

¹ This would make them contemporaries of Chandra Gupta II, Kumara Gupta, Skanda Gupta, and Pura Gupta.

² Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 82.

³ Fleet, *G. I.*, No. 49, p. 225.

⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 50, p. 227.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, No. 49, p. 225.

was the foremost of all kings in respect of wisdom . We may therefore rightly believe that it was his keen political insight coupled with his consummate generalship that gained for Yajñavarman a great influence in Magadha. It is remarkable that the inscription does not fail to remember the nobility of Yajñavarman's ancestry ².

The same inscription also bears witness to his upright character. His modesty and purity are eulogised in terms than which perhaps none can be found more appropriate or dignified. He is said to have been pure "as the spotless moon" ³ and modest "like an ocean which adheres to the natural state of tranquility" ⁴. That he was also of a religious turn of mind is evidenced by the fact that he celebrated copious sacrifices ⁵. Finally the inscription remarks that he was liberal ⁶, which might be understood to mean that he helped his subjects whenever they were in distress and did not burden them with heavy taxes. He had the welfare of his people at heart, and they in their turn must have served him well.

Yajñavarman was indeed a truly successful ruler, and it stands to his credit that he brought the Maukharis once more into the limelight of Magadhan politics after a period of oblivion which had lasted for nearly three quarters of a century.

¹ *Ibid.*, No. 50, p. 227.

² *Ibid.* *

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

Sardulavarman

Sardulavarman was the son and successor of Yajñavarman. Of the three members of this line of rulers, Sārdulavarman seems to have enjoyed the greatest authority for he is explicitly stated to be a *mahāsāmanta-chudāmani*.

As is evident from the Barābar Hill inscription the other ruling chieftains must have viewed with jealousy the aggrandisement of their neighbour and naturally considerable hostility seems to have existed at this time between these chieftains and Sārdulavarman, the powerful representative "of the family of the kingly Maukharis"—"*bhūpānām Maukharīṇām kulam*"¹. The same inscription also records that Sārdulavarman invariably got the better of his adversaries and came out of these deadly engagements with flying colours—deadly engagements we can rightly call them, for as the same epigraph records, Sārdula "was a very death to hostile kings"², although no specific victories are attributed to him. Unless we are guilty of pursuing the meaning of the inscription too far, we might easily conclude that towards the end of his rule, Sārdulavarman had constrained all these feudatory chieftains to acknowledge him as their suzerain or overlord. He had now "become the ruler of the earth"³.

¹ Fleet, *G. I.*, No. 48, p. 222

² *Ibid.*, p. 223.

³ *Ibid.*

and was the best among chieftains. The second clause of the last sentence is necessary to restrict the meaning of the first clause, for we must not forget that after all Śārdulavarman was not independent—he was a feudatory prince, evidently owing allegiance to the Gupta sovereign. It is true that the epigraphs apply both the terms *sāmanta* and *nripa* to Śārdulavarman, but the latter term has to be understood merely as indicating that Śārdula was not an ordinary chieftain, but a chieftain of chieftains whose authority was tantamount to that of a king.

That Śārdulavarman was a skilled and intrepid warrior who acquired great glory by the strength and prowess of his arms is also borne out by the several enthusiastic terms of the inscriptions¹. He is styled “the illustrious”, “the torch of the family of the warrior caste”, who “conquered the stains of this present age with his fame”—a “firmly established fame”, merited principally “through waging many battles”.

Of his other personal accomplishments, besides his military prowess, the inscriptions recount but a few. Apparently he was a very handsome man, possessed of an elegant bearing and refined and courteous manners, who “resembled (the god) Smara” by “charming the thoughts of lovely women”². He was also munificent, but the field of his generosity did not extend beyond his own relatives and friends. Śārdulavarman “was a tree, the fruits of which were the (fulfilled) wishes of (his) favourites”³. He “acquired the glory of the *kalpa*-tree, by satisfying with rewards the wishes of (his) relatives and friends”⁴. About the treatment meted out to his subjects at large the epigraphs are scrupulously silent. Whereas on the one hand the inscriptions lavishly extol the noble and genuine qualities of mind and heart that were the proud possession of Śārdulavarman’s own father, Yajñavarman, they attribute none of these

¹ *Ibid.*

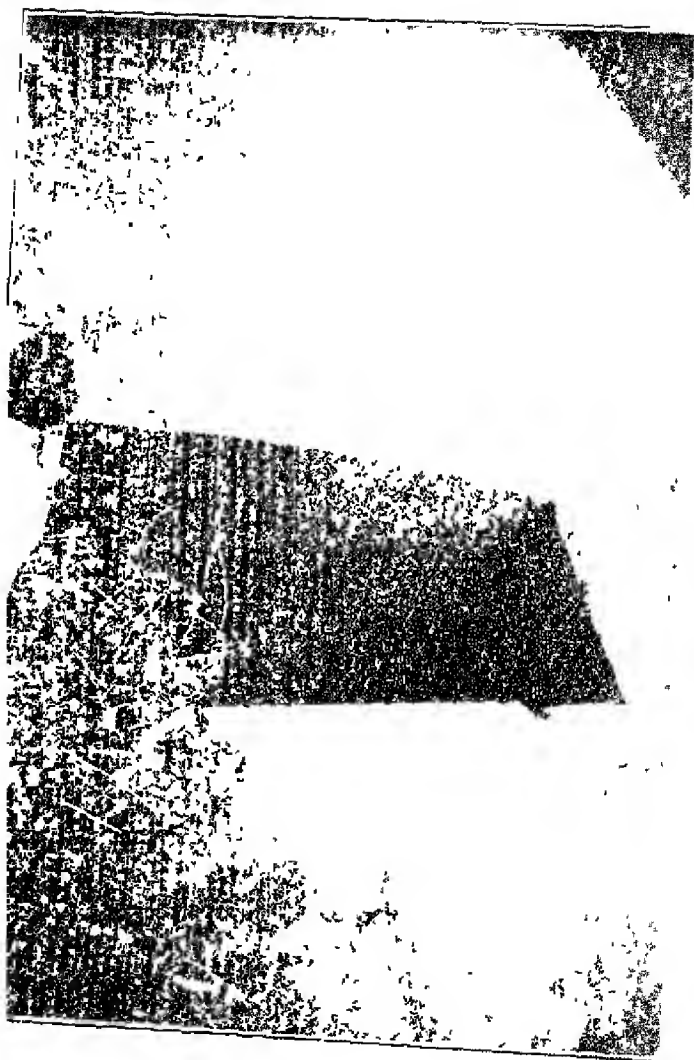
² *Ibid.*, pp. 223 and 228.

³ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 223.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 228.

illustrious traits to his son and one is led to infer from such an omission that Śārdulavarman was a selfish and unsympathetic ruler who had at heart his own interests more than the welfare of his subjects. It is not too much to surmise therefore that as an administrator he was not very successful. We cannot expect the inscriptions to tell us this, remembering that they were engraved while Śārdulavarman was still alive. If his liberality only affected a small section of his subjects, it is naturally difficult to believe that he could have meted out equal justice to all without distinction of birth or title. Taxation, too, must have been burdensome and unequally distributed. In fine, Śārdulavarman was not at all a great character; his was but a mediocre intellect and a meagre soul, his only redeeming quality being his extraordinary military ability.



CHAPTER III

Anantavarman

Anantavarman was the son of Śārdulavarman. Both the Nāgārjunī and the Barābar inscriptions are the records of Anantavarman. The principal object of all the three inscriptions is apparently to record the installation of an image — in each case a different one — in each of the cave-temples where the inscriptions have been engraved. In one of the Nāgārjunī Caves — the Vadathūka Cave — it is an image of Ardhanārīśvara that was installed. The image represents Śiva in the form of Bhutapati or “the lord of ghosts”, and his wife Pārvatī, under the name of Devī. That the image was a beautiful piece of iconography the inscription itself bears witness: it was “possessed of excellences some of them (previously) beheld (in other images) but others not so”¹.

In the Gopī Cave², also in the Nāgārjunī Hills, Anantavarman placed an image of Pārvatī under the name of Kātyāyanī. Never for a moment did Anantavarman realise at that time that this cave would one day be abandoned to the winds as it now is, for, as he says in the inscription in the entrance of the cave, he desired “a shrine of religious merit that should endure as long as the sun, the earth, the moon and the stars”³. This inscription also reveals to us that

¹ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 225.

² The epithet ‘wonderful’ applied to this cave is significant of its entirely secluded situation (Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 228).

³ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 228.

Anantavarman settled a perpetual endowment upon Pārvaṭī, under the name of Bhāvanī, a village, the name of which has been destroyed, practically beyond recognition¹. The village evidently enjoyed a convenient situation at the foot of one of the Nāgārjunī Hills, "the radiance of the sun being screened off"² from it by this lofty mountain. Perhaps it lay in the valley formed by the two parallel ridges that constitute these hills, and the prevalence of bricks and other building material in this locality is an indication of its having been once inhabited. The village appears from the inscription to have been a very lovely and delightful spot, covered with grove of *priyamgu* and *vakula* trees³, and filled with the perfume of these trees agitated by the gentle breezes that blew incessantly in the valley. A river flowed very close by the village—evidently the river Phalya, a tributary of the Ganges—washing away by its pure waters⁴ "the sin, impurity, mud and blemishes"⁵ of the village. In the Komasa Rishi Cave, in the Barābar Hills, Anantavarman placed a beautiful image of Viṣṇu in his incarnation as Kṛiṣṇa⁶.

It is remarkable that no title is given to Anantavarman in any of the three inscriptions; evidently, when these records were engraved, Śārdulavarman was still ruling and Anantavarman was only the heir-apparent. All the three inscriptions, however, speak of Anantavarman's great virtues⁷. He was the beloved of his father—a loving and dutiful son who afforded "endless pleasure" to the aged ruler; he was the be-

¹ Prinsep, *J. A. S. B.*, VI, p. 672, fills up the name of the village as Dandī or Pondī.

² Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 228.

³ Fleet identifies the *priyamgu* and *vakula* trees with the *Panicum Italicum*, and the *Mimusops Elengi* respectively (*G. I.*, p. 228, note).

⁴ This verse might seem to refer to "the pure waters of the Mahanadi", but this river does not come anywhere within 250 miles of Nāgārjunī.

⁵ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 228.

⁶ Prinsep, *J. A. S. B.*, VI, p. 674, thought that this Krishna was perhaps a son of Anantavarman.

⁷ Cf. Fleet, *G. I.*, pp. 223-228.

loved of his subjects a devoted prince who captivated the hearts of mankind His was an unsuined fame, spotless as the rays of the moon" He possessed a fine soul and a highly religious intellect, "animated with innate piety." If, as we have seen, Sārdulavarman was illiberal towards his subjects, his son perhaps erred on the benevolent side; he certainly made amends for his father's shortcomings, for the people all benefited by his fortune Like his father, Anantavarman was also a skilled and dauntless warrior, in particular, a great adept with the bow and arrow; and he evidently assisted his father in his numerous and arduous campaigns Indeed, Anantavarman was an ornament to the Maukhari family; and such was the fascination of his personality that it has been said of him that the deer, when they saw him hunting, stood still and gazed at him, only to be killed by his infallible missiles¹.

Nothing is known of Anantavarman as a ruler; but there can be little doubt that all the noble qualities manifested by him in his youth only matured as he grew older, enabling him to serve his people as a real sovereign should.

Who succeeded Anantavarman we can hardly tell with any degree of certainty That Harivarman's dynasty succeeded the line of Yajñavarman seems to be pretty sure, but whether Harivarman was the immediate successor of Anantavarman we do not know; and even if Harivarman succeeded to the *śimhāsana* of Anantavarman, he could not have been his son, else Anantavarman would have been mentioned in the genealogical tree of Harivarman's dynasty. Possibly Anantavarman died without any sons, and Harivarman was a sister's or a brother's son.

¹ Cf. *I. A.*, XX, p. 190

PART IV

Harivarman's Dynasty

CHAPTER I

Harivarman

Harivarman is known to us as the founder of a dynasty of Maukharis who were destined to wield the imperial sceptre in India, for we know of at least three monarchs of this line whose influence in the politics of Āryavarta was paramount. When Harivarman ascended the throne of Eastern Magadha, the Imperial Gupta dynasty had not yet died out¹. Pura Gupta, the youngest son of Kumāra Gupta I, ruled in Western Magadha, and had his metropolis most probably at Kāśī². Evidently Harivarman's sway extended over a larger territory than did the influence of Yajñavarman's line, for whereas the latter were merely *sāmantas* or feudatory chiefs, Harivarman is styled a *Mahārāja* in the Asirgadh seal inscription. It therefore looks as if the Guptas, whose power was gradually diminishing, were forced to retreat westwards giving place to the Maukhari kings who were steadily but surely building up an Empire. Nevertheless, Harivarman does not seem to have been more than a minor potentate, nor does he make any pretensions to the imperial title of *Mahārājādhirāja* which was still to remain for two more generations with the Guptas of Western Maga-

¹ Vaidya, *H. M. H. I.*, p. 41, is certainly wrong in stating that "in the time of the Maukharis, the Gupta empire and rule had passed away".

² Cf. Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 285.

dha. A circumstance perhaps that enabled the Muktariis gradually to assert their independence was the removal of the Gupta capital from Pātaliputra to the west. Already during the reigns of Chandra Gupta II, Kumāra Gupta I and Skanda Gupta Ajodhyā seems to have enjoyed the honour of being the headquarters of the empire¹. The large number of Gupta coins recovered at Ajodhyā at least proves that the city had a mint, and that it was one of the most important cities of the Empire². Paramārtha, a Buddhist author of the sixth century, describes Skanda Gupta as having taken refuge at Ajodhyā³. But Allan identifies Vikramāditya of Aśmī with Pura Gupta because the legend *Śrī Vikramāditya* appears on the reverse of Pura Gupta's coins. After Pura Gupta the capital city seems to have been Kāśī.

Besides the imperial Guptas there was another dynasty of Guptas who dominated the eastern half of Mālwa. Some historians are of opinion that these Guptas succeeded the imperial Guptas and ruled in Magadha, but tangible evidence is available to show that they belonged to Mālwa. The Apsad inscription of Ādityasena and the *Harsha Charter* are the two sources that furnish us with the necessary information. The Apsad inscription recapitulates the genealogy of these kings, but does not acquaint us with the country where they were established. The inscription, however, mentions that one of the kings, Mādhava Gupta, was desirous of the company of Harsha. On the other hand, the existence of the Gupta kings in Mālwa is attested to by Bāṇa who mentions two sons of the king of Mālwa, named Kumāra Gupta and Mādhava Gupta, figuring as the companions of Rājya and Harsha at the court of the Thānesar Rāja

¹ Cf. Smith, *J. R. A. S.*, 1908, p. 770

² Out of fifteen specimens of the rare copper coinage in Sir A. Cunningham's cabinet, ten came from Ajodhya, and the five copper coins in the late Mr. Hooper's collection all came from the same place. Tregear's example of Kumara Gupta's copper issues, at one time considered unique, also was obtained at Ajodhya. (Smith, *J. R. A. S.*, 1908, p. 770, note).

³ Smith, *Early History of India*, p. 292

Prabhakaravardhana. The common characterisation of Mādhava Gupta as a companion of Harsha, is in my opinion a sufficient ground to identify the two kings of this name mentioned by Bāṇa and the engraver of the Aṃśad inscription. From this it follows that the later Guptas up to (but not including) Mādhava Gupta should be regarded as kings of Mālhwā. Nevertheless, it must be borne in mind that Bāṇa does not call Mādhava Gupta a Mālhwā king, but merely a prince attendant on Harsha, but he does refer to Mādhava's father as a ruler of Mālhwā, though he does not give us his name, which, however, we know from the Aṃśad epigraph to be Mahāsena Gupta. A careful consideration of the Deo-Varanārka inscription of Jivita Gupta II also helps us to discover whether the Gupta kings mentioned in the Aṃśad inscription hailed from Magadha. The inscription which records the continuance of the grant of a village in South Bihār refers to Balāditya, one of the imperial Guptas, and offers him to the Maukharī Śarvavarman and Avantivarman. No mention is made of their later Gupta contemporaries in connection with the previous grants of the village, evidently because they had nothing to do with it.

From the Aṃśad inscription it appears as if the first three members of the Gupta dynasty of Mālhwā were the contemporaries of the first three Maukharī rulers of Harivarman's line. In this case the Guptas of Mālhwā could not have been the direct descendant of the imperial line, for the first three members of the Mālhwā line become the contemporaries of the last four of the Magadha dynasty.

Another power to be reckoned with during the time of Harivarman was that of the Hūṇas, who seem to have established dominion over the Punjab and the western half of Mālhwā¹. The powerful Hūṇic sovereign Toramāṇa might have been Harivarman's contemporary, and must have disputed the imperial dignity with the Magadha Guptas.

¹ Cunningham, *Coins of Ancient India*, p. 99, considers that Besnagar was certainly the capital of Eastern, as Ujjain was the capital of Western Malwa.

Very like y Harivarman a so iad his share of the ights wit the Hūnic invaders. The power of the Hunas owerver w s finally curbed by Yasodharman, a Ma-wa triba chieftain and Balāditya¹, one of the last of the imperial Guptas, both of whom overthrew in battle the powerful Hūnic king, Mihirakula. Yasodharman after his victory assumed the imperial title.

It is a real pity that the inscriptions speak of no historical events connected with the reign of Harivarman, else these would have been very useful for chronological purposes. The Harāhā inscription, for example, merely gives him ordinary praises, and we have to make the best we can of these in order to be able to appraise him at his true worth. Moreover, the recorders never trouble themselves to mention the kingdom where Harivarman or any of the other kings of his line ruled—may be, because everybody was so well acquainted with it. The Asirgadh Seal inscription is an important record because, besides giving us a genealogy of the family beginning with Harivarman and ending with Sarvavarman, it also gives us the names of the Maukhari Queens². Harivarman's Queen is called Jayasvāmini. It is also valuable because it displays the device or symbol of the Maukhari family. The original of the inscription is evidently the seal, presumably of copper, of a copper-plate grant of the Maukhari Sarvavarman, but the grant does not appear to have ever come to light. We cannot even say that the seal itself was found. It may be that only impressions of it were discovered, and the published accounts are not very clear on this point. The upper part of the seal is taken up by the emblem. In the centre we see a bull decorated with a garland

¹ As Raychaudhury says, Baladitya was possibly a *bruda* of the "glorious Bhanu Gupta, the bravest man on the earth, a mighty king, equal to Partha" (*History of Ancient India*, p. 368).

² Wilson, *J. R. A. S.*, III, p. 379, read Hovari for Maukhari and hence could make nothing of the names mentioned in the record. Wilkins, in his translation, omitted the word altogether.

and walking to the proper right. An umbrella, the staff of which is decorated with twin streamers appears beyond the bull, may be, attached to its off-side. In front of the bull, and therefore on the proper right side there is a man in a walking posture, carrying in his right hand a curved double axe with a transverse handle, and in his left something that may be either a standard with a wheel or a sun-emblem attached to the top of it, or an *abdāgir* or sunshade. Behind the bull, on the proper right, walks another man with an ordinary long-handled double axe in his left hand, and in his right either a *chauri* brush or a stick with which he is urging the bull. Three seals discovered at Nālandā have also been published¹. Of one the upper half has been lost, but the other two exhibit the same device as that of the Asirgadh Seal².

That Harivarman had made a mark in the political circles of his day need not be doubted. The Asirgadh Seal inscription calls him "the illustrious Mahārāja" and proclaims that his fame "stretched out beyond the four oceans"³, whilst the Harāhā inscription remarks that his "name was worthy of fame"⁴. After the review of the political condition of Northern India on Harivarman's accession to the throne given above, one must needs be struck by the fact that Harivarman

¹ Vide Dikshit, *A. S. I. R.*, Eastern Circle, 1917-18, p. 44.

² These are not the only Maukharī seals unearthed at Nalanda. When I was at Nalanda in 1931 I was able to examine quite a large number of these seals, but as I was promised photographs of these seals I did not trouble to take notes of them. But though after my return I have been striving my utmost to obtain these photographs they are still coming. However, there is one thing I remember among these Maukharī seals there were some that bore the device of a couchant lion instead of the bull and its attendants.

³ Fleet *G. I.*, p. 221. This passage, as Prinsep says (*J. A. S. B.*, V, p. 484), might be translated as follows: Harivarman's glory "was transcendent by reason of his four great goods", the four goods or *bhādras*, according to the Hindus, being religious duty, wealth, pleasure and eternal salvation.

⁴ *E. I.*, XIV, p. 119.

succeeded in maintaining the integrity of the kingdom he had inherited. Evidently, if he was not powerful enough to extend the limits of his dominion, he was at least strong enough to prevent them from falling into the possession of his jealous neighbours. But the Asirgadh Seal does claim more conquests for Harivarman when it says that he "had other kings brought into subjection by (his) prowess and by affection (for him)".¹ These words seem to suggest that Harivarman's policy of conquest was not always aggressive and provocative, he was able to impose his authority over other princes by a conciliatory and affectionate attitude towards them. Who were these princes subdued by Harivarman? We know next to nothing. It has already been hinted that Harivarman must have engaged the Hūṇas, who were at this time trying to establish an empire in India. In all probability, therefore, he assisted his Magadha Gupta sovereign against these intruders from the North, and for all we know, received some territories from the Gupta king in recompense for his invaluable services. Such a supposition might explain the extension of the small territory that was the humble possession of Yajñavarman and his two successors.

As we have already seen, it appears from the Aṃśad inscription that Kṛishṇa Gupta, who started the Mālwa line of Gupta kings, was a contemporary of Harivarman, who, as Aravamuthan suggests, might have ruled about 480 A. D.² It also seems from the same inscription that Kṛishṇa Gupta entered into a contest with Harivarman Maukharī. In the passage which bears out my suggestion it is stated that Kṛishṇa Gupta's "arm played the part of a lion, in bruising the foreheads of the array of rutting elephants of (his) haughty enemies".³ Why should this passage refer precisely to a contest with the Maukharis? There are just two reasons in support of this conjecture. Besides this case, the Aṃśad

¹ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 221.

² Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 108.

³ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 205.

inscription recounts at least two more instances of the bitter enmity that existed between the Maukharis and the Malwa Guptas, and the deadly feuds that resulted therefrom. In the other two cases, however, the inscription is explicit, evidently because the victories on both the occasions were decisive. The fight between Kṛishṇa Gupta and Harivarman, on the other hand, was a drawn contest; Kṛishṇa Gupta's arm was only able to "bruise the foreheads" of the Maukhari elephants. Moreover, the enmity between the two houses was just in its budding stage, and it is possible that the belligerents sought an early solution by effecting a compromise. The second reason why I hold that the passage refers to the Maukharis is because the same inscription again speaks later on of "the proudly stepping array of mighty elephants belonging to the Maukhari" Śarvavarman.¹

We might even suggest that a marriage alliance was arranged, Kṛishṇa Gupta giving the hand of his daughter, Harsha Gupta, in wedlock to Ādityavarman, the son of the Maukhari king.

It is evident from what the inscriptions say, making concession for all that is poetic and hyperbolic in them, that Harivarman was a great success as a ruler. Amongst the Maukharis, says the author of the *prāśasti* of the Harāhā inscription, "king Harivarman was first born for the welfare of the earth"². His kindness never failed his subjects, and he strove his utmost to make them happy. As the Asirgadh Seal inscription says, Harivarman "was the remover of the affliction of his subjects"³, who in turn must have loved their King intensely. He resembled (the god) Chakradhara inasmuch as he employed "his sovereignty for regulating the different castes and stages of religious life"⁴. He was virtuous and upright in all his dealings, and if his memory deserves to be cherished it is because he was able by his

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

² *E. I.*, XIV, p. 119.

³ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 221.

⁴ *Ibid.*

not be able to perpetuate the moral laws in the world. If ever he lost his composure and serenity it was during a battle when his face would glow "red on account of the lustre of fire (i. e. anger)"². For this reason, and because "his splendour destroyed the wealth of the enemy"³, he was surnamed *Jvālāmukha* or flame-faced.

There is yet another contest in which Harivarman might have been engaged. A very early Tamil work, the *Śilappadikāram*, narrates how a Chōla King Karikāla, seeing that he had subdued all the neighbouring states in the south, thought of leading an expedition into Āryavarta with the hope of finding antagonists whom he could engage. Accordingly he marched right up to the Himālayas, and it is said that on his way back the king of Avanti sought his alliance, and the kings of Vajra and Magadha paid tribute to him⁴. We do not know when this invasion of Karikāla took place, and who was the king of Magadha conquered by him. But for reasons given below, it appears likely that Harivarman or his successor was the unfortunate ruler to suffer at the hands of the Chōla monarch. That the Magadha referred to in the poem is the Magadha of Northern India there can be no doubt, as it is mentioned together with Avanti and Vajra, two kingdoms which clearly belonged to the north. That the king of Magadha who is spoken of is a Maukharī might be inferred from the fact that the Maukharis and the Chōlas also came to blows during the reign of Īśānavarman⁵. Finally it is supposed that the Maukharī king subdued by Karikāla was Harivarman or his successor on the score that such a defeat was more probable when the Maukharī power was still in its infancy⁶. The poem tells us that the Magadha king present-

¹ Cf. Haraha inscription of Isanavarman, *E. I.*, XIV, p. 119.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ The poem also speaks of the excursions of two other southern kings to the north—those of the Cheeras, Imayavarmamban and Senguttuvan.

⁵ *E. I.*, XIV, p. 120.

⁶ Cf. Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 30.

ed Kar ka a with a ha of audience as a tribute on the very battlefield where he had been worsted, the king of Vajra presented him with a 'canopy' and the king of Avanti a festooned 'triumphal arch', all the three articles being the handiwork of Maya, the artificer by special appointment to the gods⁴

⁴ Cf Aravamuthan, *op. cit* , p. 28.

CHAPTER I

Adityavarman

After the death of Harivarman the Maukhan sceptre passed into the hands of his son Ādityavarman. As we have seen, Ādityavarman's mother was Queen Jayasvāmini¹, who is given the titles *Bhattārika* and *Devi* in the Asirgadhi Seal inscription. Evidently she was a Queen much revered by her subjects, because the word *bhattārika* literally means 'she who is entitled to reverence or homage', and the word *devi*, though it is the technical title of the wife of a *mahārāja*, literally means "the bright one".

Ādityavarman himself, according to the same inscription was married to Harsha Gupta², apparently a Gupta princess, and in all likelihood a sister or a daughter of the contemporary Gupta King of Mālwa, Harsha Gupta³. This connecting link between the two houses seems to have been the result of negotiations between Harivarman and Krishna Gupta, both of whom were anxious for the termination of an untoward hostility that had suddenly sprung up and for the establishment of more friendly relations between the two families.

¹ Prinsep, *J. A. S. B.*, V, p. 484, read Ankadevi for Jayasvāmini.

² Kittoe, *J. A. S. B.*, XXX, p. 272 misread this name as Hashka Gupta; Prinsep, *Indian Antiquities*, II, p. 251, calls her Arikari and adds the remarkable observation that she was the eldest daughter of the Gupta, there being absolutely no warrant in the inscription for such a remark.

³ Harsha Gupta was the son and successor of Krishna Gupta.



Though from the Apsad inscription we gather that Harsha Gupta of Mālwa had to enter into contests with several princes, there are no clues whatsoever to indicate that he also fought the Maukharis. Nor do we know from any inscriptions that have so far come to light that Ādityavarman had to wage any wars with his enemies¹. If he did fight it must have been against the Hūṇas on the side of the Magadha Guptas. It is true that during his time the Hūṇas had achieved the acme of their power, and were still bent on gaining fresher laurels. Hsuen Tsiang tells us that Balāditya overthrew Mihirakula, the son and successor of Toramāṇa, leaving him the ruler of a "small kingdom in the north"². If this victory of Balāditya is referred to a battle earlier than that in which Yaśodharman defeated Mihirakula, then the battle could have taken place in the reign of Ādityavarman, in which case Ādityavarman might have lent his aid to the Gupta king³. But it has been proved that Balāditya's victory was neither earlier nor identical with that of Yaśodharman⁴. It took place some time after 533-34 A. D., the date of the Yaśodharman-Mihirakula fight; and Ādityavarman could have had no share in it, as he was very probably not living at the time. The only contests, therefore, that could have provided him with opportunities of displaying "his prowess with the bow" "with all the energy of a man"⁵, and the "innate warriors' skill" which "pervaded (his very) soul"⁶, must have been with the petty chiefs of the neighbourhood

¹ Prinsep's translation of the Asīrgadh Seal inscription in *J.A.S.B.*, V, p. 484, suggests that he did wage many wars. But this reading is incorrect. Instead of translating "who meditated on his (i.e. his father's) feet", he reads, "whose excellent victories equalled those of his father".

² *Si-yu-ki*, I, p. 171

³ That the Maukharis still owed allegiance to the Guptas of Magadha is seen from the fact that the highest title given to Adityavarman is *Maharaja* in the Asīrgadh Seal inscription.

⁴ Cf. Heras, *I H Q.*, III, pp. 1-12.

⁵ Fleet, *G I.*, p. 230.

⁶ *Ibid.*

His reign seems to have been on the whole an era of peace and happiness for his subjects. His "spotless fame" is said incidentally in the fragmentary Jaunpur inscription to have "spread far and wide over the regions" ¹. That he was a really fit ruler is evidenced by the Harāhā inscription, which says that through Ādityavarman "the Creator obtained the full result of his laying down the regulations of right conduct for the four castes and stages of life" ², which regulations he not only strictly enforced upon the people, but observed himself. That he was a pious man who frequently performed magnificent sacrifices is the testimony of both the Harāhā and the Jaunpur inscriptions. The latter declares that Ādityavarman's "religious merit, arising from sacrifices, spread out over the sky (in the form of) the mass of the clouds of the canopy of the smoke (of his oblations)" ³. But the description of the sacrifices as is given by the Harāhā inscription is much more picturesque. "when fire was kindled during his sacrificial performances, the volume of smoke, black like pitch darkness, rising on all sides and increased through the tossing and whirling produced by the wind in the sky, made the crowds of peacocks noisy, as they mistook it for a large cloud" ⁴.

¹ *Ibid*

² *E. I.*, XIV, p. 119

³ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 230.

⁴ *E. I.*, XIV, p. 119

Isvaravarman

Isvaravarman was the son of Adityavarman¹ and of his Gupta consort Harsha Guptā². That Isvaravarman was destined to exalt and celebrate the name of the *Maukhari-kula* is revealed by the Harāhā inscription which declares that "for the obtainment of martial glory" Adityavarman "caused the birth of Isvaravarman"³. The diverse designations given to Isvaravarman in the different inscriptions, however, are noteworthy. The Asirgadh Seal inscription calls him a *Mahārāja*, the Harāhā inscription gives him the appellation *kshatipati*, whilst in the Jaunpur inscription he is styled a *nripati*; yet none of these titles conveys to us the idea of sovereignty or independence which we feel inclined to believe was enjoyed by him at least towards the end of his reign. There can be no doubt that in his time the Maukharis were indeed in a flourishing state. The Jaunpur inscription is explicit on this point⁴.

Isvaravarman's wife was Upa Gupta, evidently again a Gupta princess of Mālwa. We may deduce from this fact

¹ Wilkins, *J. R. A. S.*, III, p. 379 reads the name of Isvaravarman's father as Diviya Varmma

² Queen Harsha Gupta like Queen Jayasvamini is also designated *Bhattarika* and *Devi* in the Asirgadh Seal inscription (Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 221).

³ *E. I.*, XIV, p. 119.

⁴ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 230. The Maukhari family is here called Maukhara

that the amicable relations embarked upon during the previous reign continued unsevered during the reign of Īśvara-varman; no accounts have come down to us which indicate even the slightest degree of discord between the two families in the reign of this monarch, though the Jaunpur inscription enumerates several victorious contests which might be ascribed to him.

The inscription, unfortunately, is a fragment, the extant portion being one of at least four stones on which the complete record must have been engraved. Dr. Fleet is certainly correct when he says that nothing of the inscription has been lost at the top and at the end of the lines. What is missing is the beginning of each line (from thirty-eight to eighty-two *aksharas*, probably the larger number, according to Fleet), and an indefinite number of lines below the last ¹. The stone on which the extant fragment of the inscription can be seen forms one of the lower voussoirs of the outer arch of the south gate of the Jummā Masjid at Jaunpur, the capital of the district of the same name in the United Provinces of Āgrā and Oudh. The letters of the inscription as Fleet observes, belong to the northern class of alphabets and are radically of much the same type as those of the Asirgadh Seal inscription of Śarvavarman, though in some details they are still more embellished. The language of the inscription is Sānskr̥t, and the extant portion is in verse; but unfortunately it contains no date. Fleet, however, ascribes the inscription to Īśvaravarman, who is the only king mentioned in it by name. Mr. Hirananda Sastri is inclined to attribute it to his successor, Īśānavarman ². Mr. Mazumdar follows Fleet, and thinks that the inscription may be safely placed in the last quarter of the fifth century or the first quarter of the sixth, at any rate earlier than 554 A. D., which is the earliest known date of Īśānavarman ³. But there is hardly any warrant for these assumptions. The record might

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

² *E. I.*, XIV, p. 112.

³ *I. A.*, XLVI, p. 127.

have been much longer and might have belonged to a later ruler¹. It is very probable also that Jaunpur was subject to the authority of the king who set up this inscription.

As regards the evidence contained in the Jaunpur inscription, we can hardly be certain whether it refers to Īśvaravarman himself or to one or more of his successors; but the fact that Īśānavarman was able to score, as we shall see, such great victories not long after, and to assume the imperial title of *mahārājādhirāja*, induces me to believe that Īśvaravarman succeeded in establishing himself as a very powerful king, and that his victories substantially paved the way for his son's colossal success. We must not, however, lose sight of one great event that contributed in no small measure to the increase of Īśvaravarman's power. This was the final destruction and the end of the Gupta power. The Hūṇas, by their repeated and persistent attacks, had sapped the very foundations of the Gupta power. We are aware that the Hūṇic chief Toramāṇa for a time disputed the sovereignty of Northern India. It is true that his successor Mihirakula was defeated by Balāditya, but undoubtedly not without any detriment to the Gupta prestige. Mihirakula had previously been defeated by the Mālhwā chief, Yaśodharman, who forthwith subjected the whole of the Ganges-Lauhitya valley, established his supremacy over the Guptas, and appropriated to himself the title of the sovereign of India². But Yaśodharman's success was transitory³. His meteoric rise had a logical breakdown. The other powers of Northern India were not going to brook the dominion of an upstart. The Maukharis and the Guptas of eastern Mālhwā, who were allied by matrimonial ties, now had visions of enriching themselves

¹ Dikshit, *E. I.*, XVII, p. 193, believes that the inscription belongs to the same period as the fifth Damodarpur plate (*i.e.* 543 A. D.). It was, he adds, probably on account of the Maukhari ascendancy in Īśvaravarman's time in Ajodhya that the noble-born Amritadeva (the donor of the plate) had to leave his native place Ajodhya for the distant Pundravardhana.

² Cf. Niharranjan Ray, *The Calcutta Review*, XXVI, p. 201.

³ Dikshit, *E. I.*, XVII, p. 193.

upon the spoils of the Magadha Guptas, may they determined also to overthrow Yaśodharman. That they succeeded seems to be evidenced by the Dāmodarpur copperplate inscription of 533-34 A. D., and the Jaunpur inscription. The Jaunpur inscription tells us that "a spark of fire that had come by the road from (the city of) Dhārā, was quickly extinguished by Īśvaravarman". This lord of Dhārā seems to have been none other than the western Mālwa king, Yaśodharman. It is possible that Yaśodharman transferred his capital from Ujjain to Dhārā after he had proclaimed himself the paramount sovereign of Northern India. The two cities are very near each other. The Dāmodarpur copperplate inscription of 533-34 A. D. — the very same year of the Mandasori stone inscription—that proves the possession of Pundravardhana (a province lying between the Indian interior and the Lauhitya) by Yaśodharman, represents the son and viceroy of a Gupta king, a *Paramabhattachāraka Mahārājādhirāja-Prithivipati* (whose name is lost in the inscription), as governing over Pundravardhanabhukti¹. Could this viceroy not have been a son of Jīvita Gupta I, the Gupta King of Mālwa? It is true that Balāditya was still alive, but he does not appear to have been strong enough to overthrow Yaśodharman². That Jīvita Gupta was capable of extending and even defeating a powerful Emperor like Yaśodharman is avowed by the Aphsad inscription which says that "his superhuman deeds are regarded with astonishment by all mankind, like the leap of (the monkey Hanumān) the son of the Wind from the side of (the mountain) Kośavardhana"³. There is, however, one fact that militates against the theory that Jīvita Gupta's son was the governor of Pundravardhana. the governor is said to be the son of *mahārājādhirāja*. It is not very likely that Jīvita Gupta could have proclaimed himself the Emperor of the north. The imperial title came to this family only in the time of Ādityasena. But even if it is true that it was a son of Balā-

¹ Niharranjan Ray, *The Calcutta Review*, XXVI, p. 9-11

² Cf. Heras, *I H. Q.*, III, pp. 1-12.

³ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 205.

ditya who ruled in Pundravardhana, this does not in any way contradict my original theory that Īśvaravarman and Jivita Gupta allied themselves to throw off the yoke of Yaśodharman's authority.

Īśvaravarman's ambition did not stop at his victory over the king of Dhārā. He engaged the Lord of the Andhras, who was easily defeated, and "wholly given over to fear took up (his) abode in the crevices of the Vindhya mountains"¹. The defeat of the Āndhras was an important feature of his reign for, nothing daunted, the Āndhras once more joined issue with the Maukharis in the reign of the next king, Īśānavarman, but they had again to confess failure. He next successfully tackled another king, who being defeated "went to the Raivataka mountain" in the Saurāshtra country or Kathiawār². These are the only three contests referred to by the Jaunpur inscription³. We cannot obtain any further knowledge about the other exploits of Īśvaravarman and his successors from the inscription, because the stones reading the subsequent events have been lost. Nevertheless the little that this inscription acquaints us with is sufficient for us to form an estimate of the capabilities of Īśvaravarman. Though he does not in the Harāhā inscription receive the imperial title like his successors, we would not be wrong in asserting that "the imperial ambitions of the Maukharis were first embodied in Īśvaravarman"⁴, "who was a very lion to (hostile) kings"⁵.

Īśvaravarman's success as a ruler was the sheer outcome of his illustrious self. He displayed a sufficiency of every desirable disposition; and his virtues "effected the happiness of mankind"⁶. He was compassionate and affectionate, and

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 230

² Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 230 This king was probably the ruler of Valabhi

³ Mookerji, *Journal of Indian History*, IV, p. 19, thinks that Īśvaravarman's conquering raids to the Vindhya and Raivataka mountains were both in pursuit of the Andhras.

⁴ Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 54

⁵ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 230.

⁶ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 230.

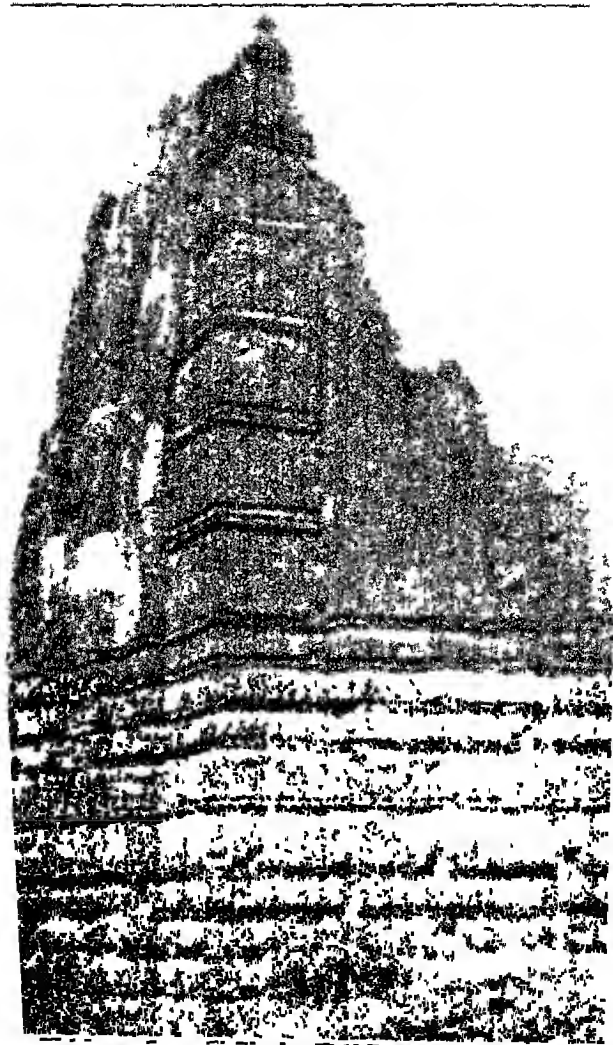
did all in his power to mitigate the distress of his subjects. The Haraha inscription has an exquisite allegory of Išvara-varman's virtues, which might be quoted here. This is what the eulogist says of him. 'In the pursuit of virtue other kings in their efforts failed to equal him, whose pious conduct had uprooted the character of the Kali Age and who possessed the glory of Yayāti. Qualifying his high bravery by political wisdom, his friendship by honesty, his lofty ambition by his noble descent, his liberality by fit recipients, his might of wealth by modesty, his youth by self-restraint, his speech by truthfulness, his manner of life by the injunctions of the *Śruti*, and his high prosperity by humility, he never felt tired in the world, though it was immersed in the darkness of the Iron Age"¹.

The same inscription tells us that the King being pure of soul and avid of sacrifices oft-times invoked the great god Indra. The description of these sacrifices is so poetically coloured that it is worth while quoting it: "At whose (Išvara-varman's) sacrifices, when the round of the quarters was overlaid with the smoke which arose from the fire kindled constantly in accordance with the canons and which was darkly blue like streaks of collyrium, the multitude of peacocks became noisy, then minds becoming maddened, for they thought that the rainy season, having a line of clouds bending low because of the weight of the fresh water, had set in"².

¹ Cf. Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 230

² *E. I.*, XIV, p. 119

³ *Ibid*



3. A Temple at Deo-Baranark

Isanavarman the Great

The son of the *Mahārāja* Īśvaravarman and the *Bhattārīka* and *Devī* Upa Guptā¹ was Īśānavarman². His Queen was the *Bhattārīka* and *Mahādevī* Lakshmivati³. She does not seem to have been a Gupta princess, nor do we know of any other direct ties between the Guptas and the Maukharis in the generation of Īśānavarman. On the contrary, as we shall presently see, the relations between the two families were less friendly, nay, they were hostile.

Of all the Maukhari inscriptions, the only one that might safely be attributed to Īśānavarman's reign is the Harāhā inscription⁴, so called because it was discovered at a village near Harāhā in the Barābānki district of the United Provinces. As Dr. Sastri observes, the composer of the *praśasti* does not appear to have been a poet of a very high order for several

¹ As m and p are very much alike in the lithograph, Wilkins read Uma Gupta for Upa Gupta (*J. R. A. S.*, III, p. 379).

² Isanavarman's name too was at first wrongly read as Santi Varma. Cf. Smith, *J. R. A. S.*, New Series, XXI, p. 136.

³ She is the only Queen who is called a *mahadevi* in the Asirgadhi Seal inscription.

⁴ The inscription is cut on a smooth slab of sandstone in the northern class of characters which resemble the Gupta script of the sixth century. The incision is well executed and no letters have peeled off. At present the inscription is in the Lucknow Museum.

expressions are found to recur several times through the inscription. Once again the inscription does not afford any geographical date, and we are left in the dark as to where the kings whose genealogy is traced therein held sway. Raviśānti is inscribed as the name of the composer, and he is said to be the son of Kumāraśānti, a resident of Gargarakata. It might be that the intended reading was Garggarakota, which was very likely a fort situated on the Ghāgra, a tributary of the Ganges. Can we not conclude that in all probability Garggarakata and Harāhā (which is also very close to the Ghāgra River) were both within the dominions of Śānavarmān? The engraver of the inscription is called Mihiravarman, and the name suggests that he was related to the royal family.

The Harāhā inscription is the only dated record of the Maukharis that has come down to us. The other inscriptions being all undated scholars were forced to rely mainly upon palaeographical grounds, in order to assign them to a particular period of Indian history². The date of the Harāhā inscription is given in words in the twenty-first verse as follows: "When six hundred autumns had become increased by eleven, while the illustrious Śānavarman, who had crushed his enemies, was the lord of the earth"³. It was suggested, however, that *atirikta* which means 'increased' also means 'redundant' or 'superfluous', in which case eleven years would have to be subtracted from six hundred, giving us the date of the inscription as 589⁴. But there is no instance of the word *atirikta* being used in this sense, and therefore the date must be taken as 611. Though the inscription does not specify to which era this date is to be referred, the use of the

¹ *E. I.*, XIV, p. 110

² Isanavarman's rule, for example, was placed by Cunningham in 560 A.D., by Hoernle in 564 A.D., but by Smith in 502 A.D. (Cf. *E. I.*, XIV, p. 113).

³ *E. I.*, XIV, p. 120

⁴ *Annual Report of the Lucknow Museum*, (for the year ending 31st March 1915), p. 3, note.

word *śaradam* indicates that it is to be referred to the *Vikrama samvat* which began in autumn (*śarad*) as Kielhorn has explained¹. Referred to the Christian era, this date would be equal to 554 A. D. There are other reasons, besides, in support of the Vikrama era. King Mādhava Gupta, as we know from the Aphsad inscription was a contemporary of King Harshavardhana who reigned approximately from 606 to 647 A. D. So Mādhava Gupta must have lived in the first half of the seventh century A. D. Īśānavarman, to whose reign the Harāhā inscription belongs, was a contemporary of Kumāra Gupta, the great grandfather of Mādhava Gupta, as the Aphsad inscription represents him as having fought with the former. The date of Īśānavarman therefore must be placed about half a century earlier than that of Harshavardhana. No other era is found to fulfil this condition, except the Vikrama era. The Maurya era gives too early a date, the Śaka a late one. The date 554 A. D. is supported both by palaeographic as well as numismatic² evidence. The inscription calls the rulers Mukharis, but it does not name any of the hostile kings; else its evidence would have been invaluable. Another inscription sometimes assigned to Īśānavarman's reign is the Nālandā Seal inscription without the device and the lower right quadrant, but though this inscription records the name of Īśānavarman it might have belonged to a later king whose name was engraved on that part of the inscription that has been lost.

Īśānavarman is the first Maukhari King to be styled *Mahārājādhirāja*³, and we can safely assume from his imperial title that he was a very powerful king and became independent. The title of Īśānavarman in the Nālandā seal that speaks about him is obliterated, but if we wish to fill in the lacuna we can only use the word *nripa. mahārājādhu-*

¹ *I. A.*, XX, pp. 407 ff.

² The chronology and coinage of the Maukharis will be treated in a separate chapter. As we shall see, the newly-achieved political dominance of the Maukhari house is reflected in its coinage.

³ Fleet, *Asirgadhi Seal inscription*, G. I, p. 221.

raja is too long. This does not in any way disprove that Īśānavarman claimed the imperial dignity. We cannot be guided by designations merely in appraising the importance and the power of the various kings of this dynasty. Their exploits, successful or unsuccessful, have to be considerably weighed.

It may be said without any exaggeration that the reign of Īśānavarman was the heyday of the Maukhari power. It is true that he was defeated by Kumāra Gupta III, the contemporary Gupta king of Mālhwā. But this was evidently towards the end of his reign¹, when he was already much advanced in years and had lost that juvenile vigour that had always attended his early expeditions². Excepting this failure, his career was a crescendo of successes. Some historians would attribute to Īśānavarman the victories recorded in the Jaunpur inscription, besides those mentioned in the Harāhā inscription³. As we have said, it looks more probable that the exploits enumerated in the Jaunpur epigraph were undertaken by Īśvaravarman. The Harāhā inscription ascribes three victories to Īśānavarman⁴. He first conquered "the lord of the Āndhras, who had thousands of threefold rutting elephants". There need not be any cause for surprise that the Āndhra king should have been defeated both by Īśvaravarman and his son. As Īśānavarman defeated him right in the beginning of his reign, we might suppose that though he had been once humbled by Īśvaravarman he attempted to retrieve his losses by taking advantage of the youthful king's inexperience. But he was defeated in his schemes having been mistaken in his approximation of Īśānavarman's abilities, and all his several thousand elephants

¹ Cf. below.

² The Apsad inscription says that Kumāra Gupta defeated Īśānavarman's army which was "the cause of the attainment of fortune", in other words, by which Īśānavarman had already obtained notable victories.

³ Cf. Mazumdar, *I. A.*, XLVI, p. 127, Sastri, *E. I.*, XIV, p. 112, Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis, and the Sangam Age*, p. 90.

⁴ *E. I.*, XIV, p. 120.

proved of no avail against the well-trained and formidable army of the Maukhari king. Perhaps he had to concede a portion of his territories to his victor¹. Raychaudhury thinks that the Andhra king was probably Mādhavavarman II, of the Vishnukundin family who "crossed the Godāvari with the desire to conquer the eastern region"². Whoever he might be³ it certainly seems that it was the same king whom the father and the son had to fight.

The next opponents of Īśānavarman were the Śūlikas who though "they had an army of countless galloping horses" were easily accounted for by the Maukhari king. There have been great differences of opinion as to who the Śūlikas were, and rightly so because there appears to be no other epigraphic reference to this word. Fleet tried to identify them with the Mulikas, a people in the north-west division⁴; but his identification was merely conjectural. Pandit Hirananda Sastri thinks that the Śūlikas were connected with the country called Saulika in the *Bṛihat Saṃhitā*⁵ and the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*⁶ and located in the south-east along with Kalinga, Vīdarbhā, Chedi, etc.⁷. Dr. H. C. Raychaudhary believes that the Śūlikas were perhaps the Chalukyas, Śūlika being merely a variant of Chalukya, Solaki and Solanki⁸, but Mr. Aravamuthan rightly objects that we are unaware of any Chalukya king who could have been defeated by the Maukharis⁹. S. Srikanta Sastri makes them the neighbours of the Āndhras¹⁰. In reality however, the Śūlikas seem to have been the Chōḷas¹¹.

¹ Cf. Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 97.

² Raychaudhury, *History of Ancient India*, p. 370.

³ The old Andhra empire had now perished, and we can hardly say what is meant by this mention of an Andhra king.

⁴ *I. A.*, XXII, p. 186.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, XIV, 8.

⁶ *Op. cit.*, LV.

⁷ *E. I.*, XIV, p. 112.

⁸ Raychaudhury, *H. A. I.*, p. 370.

⁹ Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 98.

¹⁰ *J. A. H. R. S.*, II, p. 180.

¹¹ Cf. Heras, *J. A. H. R. S.*, I, pp. 130-131.

We know now from Mr Aravamuthan that several kings from Dakṣiṇapatha led expeditions into the Arya countries of Northern India. One of these kings was the Chōla King Karikāla who is credited with having marched right up to the Himālayas and defeated a Magadha king, perhaps, one of the Maukharis, Harivarman or Ādityavarman. The defeated Maukhari king acknowledged the overlordship of Karikāla, and even paid him a tribute. The later Maukharis could not have forgotten the humiliation to which they had been subjected by the Chōlas; and Īśānavarman retrieved for the Maukhari family the loss of prestige which it had suffered at the hands of Karikāla. This identification of the Śūlikas with the Chōlas seems to be well founded. The Tamil name Chōla could not appeal to the engraver of the Harāhī inscription, and he substituted for it a Sāṅskṛt name, philologically similar, and at the same time reminiscent of the southern invaders ready to engage in battle with their long pikes, for the word *śūlika* means a pike bearer. The inscription moreover describes the Chōlas as possessing an army of countless galloping horses, which could mean that they really used long pikes in battle. This description of the Chōla army finds a corroboration in the *Kalvūṅgattupparaṇ*¹, where the soldiers of the Chōla King Kulōttuṅga are represented as using spears or pikes. Again the Chōla city of Kollīpakkai is often represented in the inscription as being surrounded by *śālī*².

As we have said, the change of the name Chōla into Śūlika is not improbable philologically. The Pārsis are often called Pārasikas in Sāṅskṛt inscriptions³. In some inscriptions the Chōlas are even called Chōḷigas⁴, Chōlikas and even Shōlikas⁵.

¹ Kanakasabhai Pillai, *Tamil Historical Texts*, I A., XIX, p. 332-6

² S. I I, p. 108, 221, 403; III, p. 432

³ Cf. Heras, *J. A. H. R. S.*, I, p. 131.

⁴ E. C., X, Gd, 76; XII, M1, 102.

⁵ E. C., V, Ak, 102a, XII, M1, 95-96, Rice, *Mysore Inscriptions*, p. 327. In the first inscription the Chalukyas too are mentioned, and so there cannot be any mistake in identifying these Chōlikas with the Cholas.

⁶ Cf. Gadval Plates of Vikramaditya I, where the Chola kingdom is called "the Cholika province", E. I., X, p. 105.

The victory of Īśānavarman over the Cholas undoubtedly was the first great step before his assumption of the imperial title. The *Kalīṅgattupparanī*, a Tamil poem by Jayan-
 goṇḍāṇ, the court-poet of Kulōtṭiṅga Chōḷa I (1070-1120 A. D.), tells us what was the occasion of the contest between Īśānavarman and the Chōḷas. As we have already seen, the Maukharis had been subdued by a Chōḷa king Karikāla in the time of either Harivarman or Ādityavarman. Since then they had been the feudatories of the Chōḷas. In the time of Īśānavarman another Chōḷa king Karikāla¹ ordered his feudatory kings, among whom was Īśānavarman, to assist him in building flood-banks for the river Kāvērī. But Īśānavarman who thought himself strong enough, if need be, to fight Karikāla, refused to comply with the Chōḷa king's command. This was the reason why Karikāla sallied forth to punish the Maukhari rebel, but unfortunately, Īśānavarman proved more than a match for him and he was sorely discomfited. The *Kalīṅgattupparanī* whilst recording this rebellion of Īśānavarman uses language which requires some explanation and interpretation. The pertinent stanza when translated runs as follows: "(He recorded further) how (Karikālan) directed a portrait to be drawn of the Mukhari who had not followed (the others) to the Kāvērī, the banks of which were being made by the kings themselves who had made obeisance (to him) and how looking at it and saying "this is a superfluous eye", he rubbed it out here and (lo!) it was extinguished there"². The passage clearly indicates the exasperation of Karikāla at finding his command slighted by the Maukhari king. He thought, then and there, of putting out the eyes of the disobedient and contumacious feudatory, but Īśānavarman was miles away safe in Magadha. To abate his wrath, however, he had a portrait of Īśānavarman

¹ That there were two Karikalas and not one seems to be true, on account of the very large number of years usually attributed to this king.

² Aravamuthan, *The Kaverī, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 14.

paned and then bottled out one of his eyes. The words of it was extinguished there are merely the Cambridge creation of the poet's fancy. After his fit of rage, however, had passed away, Karikāla determined to march northwards and punish the recalcitrant king.

The reasons given by Aravamuthan in support of the contention that the Mukari of the *Kalingattupparam* was a Maukharī king are sound and valid. In the first place, in none of the numerous references to Karikāla's conquests in South India do we find the name of Mukari¹; secondly, the word Maukharī might easily assume in Tamil the form Mukari²; thirdly as we have seen, the *Śilappadikaram* mentions an actual conquest of Magadha by an earlier Chōla king, also called Karikāla³. Mr. Venkatta Ramanayya has sought to identify Mukari with Trilōchana Pallava⁴, but Trilōchana is an absolutely legendary figure⁵, who can hardly be accounted for in history. Another able scholar, V. Kanakasabhai Pillai, has interpreted Mukari as the name of a place and not of a person⁶. But the evidence against such an interpretation is so overwhelming⁷, that we cannot accept Pillai's opinion.

Īśānavarman's third victory was scored at the expense of the Gaudas "living on the sea-shore", whom he caused

¹ By a "superfluous eye" the poet means that Karikāla deemed the rebellious feudatory unworthy of possessing both his eyes. One eye should be obliterated for his impudence.

² Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 27.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-30.

⁵ Venkatta Ramanayya, *Trilochana Pallava and Karikata Chola*, pp. 79-87.

⁶ Cf. Heras, *J. B. H. S.*, IV, pp. 80-86.

⁷ *I. A.*, XIX, p. 331.

⁸ Cf. Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, pp. 15-19.

in future to remain within their proper realm ¹. The Gaudas have been mentioned in connection with Western Bengal bordering on the sea and including Karṇasuvārṇa and Rādhāpurī ². This is why they are called *samudrāśrayas* in the inscription. But can we identify the Gaudas defeated by Īśānavarman with the Gaudas of whom Śaśāṅka was the King in the time of Harshavardhana? If so, this was just the beginning of the struggle between the Maukharis and the Gaudas—a struggle which was only to be consummated some three generations later in the deadly enmity of Śaśāṅka against Grahavarman Maukhari and his Thānesar allies.

It must be observed that the Harāhā inscription says that Īśānavarman “occupied the throne after conquering the Āndhra king, the Śūlikas and the Gaudas”. Most scholars have interpreted these words literally and said that these exploits of Īśānavarman were achieved during the reign of his father. Is it not possible that the passage in question was only meant to suggest that Īśānavarman had to cope with these invasions before he was left in peaceful possession of the throne? As Aravamuthan suggests, not only were these enemies repulsed, but their territories must have come under the sway of the Maukharis ³.

Though the Harāhā inscription is silent about it ⁴ it is not unnatural to presume that Īśānavarman had also to deal with the Hūṇas, now that the Gupta power was extinct. After the death of the emperor Yaśodharman the Maukharis who

¹ As Mazumdar, *I. A.*, XLVI, p. 127, says, the name Gauda occurs for the first time in the Haraha inscription; but a reference to the Gaudas seems to be implied in the Apsad inscription where we are told that “the very terrible scorching fever (of fear) left not (Jivita Gupta I's) haughty foes even though they stood on seaside shores that were cool with the flowing and ebbing currents of water (Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 205). Probably the Gaudas had already embarked upon a career of conquest about this time.

² Raychaudhury, *H. A. I.*, p. 370.

³ Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 97.

⁴ The inscription was engraved very early in Īśānavarman's reign.

assumed the imperial role must have become the foremost opponents of the Hūṇas. By the year 554 the Hūṇas had already lost their kings Toramāna and Mihirakula, but we do not know who were the Hūṇic leaders under whom the Hūṇas continued to be a source of terror and vexation not only to the Maukharis¹ but also to their allies², among whom the most important were the Thānesar Rājas who were just coming into prominence during the days of Īśānavarman³. Ādityavardhana, the grandfather of the great Harsha, seems to have been his contemporary.

The next foe that Īśānavarman had to face was the Gupta King of Mālhwā, Kumāra Gupta III⁴. Of this we are informed by the Apsad inscription. As has already been suggested the battle took place towards the end of Īśānavarman's glorious reign, and the cause of the conflict was perhaps the assumption by Īśānavarman of the imperial title⁵. Though the inscription clearly avers that the "formidable milk-ocean, the cause of the attainment of fortune, which was the army of the glorious Īśānavarman, a very moon among kings" "was quickly churned" by Kumāra Gupta⁶, it has been stated sometimes that the victory was Īśānavarman's⁷, and

¹ Isanavarman's successor, Sarvavarman had to content with them (Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 221)

² The *Harsha Charita*, p. 101, tells us that Prabhakaravardhana, the father-in-law of Grahavarman, was a 'lion to the Huna deer'.

³ If Bhau Daji's date (533-593 A. D.) for Pravarasena of Kashmir is correct, then this king was one of them (Vide *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, VIII, p. 250.)

⁴ This Kumara Gupta is not to be identified with Kumara Gupta II of the Bhitari Seal. Vide Hoernle, *J. A. S. B.*, LVIII, part 1, p. 94

Isanavarman had not assumed the imperial title when the Haraha epigraph was inscribed

⁵ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 206

⁷ Niharranjan Ray, *Calcutta Review*, XXVI, p. 207, says that Kumara Gupta merely "showed heroism" and "notwithstanding his showing heroism on the battlefield and churning the army of Isanavarman, he in the long run met with defeat at the hands of his Maukhari feudatory."

that it was this victory that warranted him to lay claims to imperial titles ¹. What appears, on the contrary, to be the truth, is that the defeat and rout of Īśānavarman's army was complete. This conflict with the Guptas like that with the Gaudas was just the beginning of a bitter enmity which culminated in the great disaster that befell the Maukhari power in the time of Deva Gupta and Grahavarman.

Īśānavarman, like his predecessor, was a successful ruler. Religious, virtuous, strong, sympathetic and resourceful, he was the idol of his people. He knew the "duties attaching to the (different) castes and stages (of life)" ². During his reign, "the three Vēdas were, so to speak, born afresh" ³. The influence of his virtuous life was great, and by him "as by the rising sun, the world, which was sunk in the darkness of the Kali Age, where the paths of virtue were constantly obscured, was again set to work" ⁴. He kept his people happy and contented, always administering to their necessities and difficulties, and his "royal splendour" was ever "conducive to the pleasure of the world by reason of his pleasing the subjects" ⁵. That he was a great warrior is also attested by the Harāha inscription. He kept a regular army, that was always under training, so much so that "the people could not distinguish between day and night on account of the dust raised by their marches" ⁶. He himself was a skilled archer and his arms "were hardened owing to the growth of the wounds caused by the blows of the bow-string" ⁷.

In fine, the reign of Īśānavarman was a glorious epoch in the annals of the Maukharis. Gone were the days of dependence and tutelage. Īśānavarman had made himself the "resplendent moon in the sky of the circle of princes" ⁸.

¹ Niharranjan Ray, *Calcutta Review*, XXVI, p. 208

² *A. S. I. R.*, Eastern Circle, 1917-18, p. 44.

³ *E. I.*, XIV, p. 120.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

⁵ *A. S. I. R.*, Eastern Circle, 1917-18, p. 44

⁶ *E. I.*, XIV, p. 120.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

CHAPTER V

Suryavarman

Suryavarman was the son of Īśānavarman. Besides the Harāhā inscription of Īśānavarman, no other epigraph records the name of this Suryavarman. There is however one inscription, the Sirpur stone inscription of Mahāśiva Gupta that speaks of one Suryavarman who was "born in the unblemished family of the Varmans, great on account of their *ādhipatya* (supremacy) over Magadha"¹. At first sight one feels inclined to identify this Suryavarman of the Sirpur stone inscription with the son of Īśānavarman. But on closer examination an obvious difficulty presents itself. Suryavarman of the Harāhā inscription could not have lived later than the last quarter of the sixth century. Very probably he lived much earlier. But Suryavarman of the Sirpur inscription cannot be placed so early². It is possible, however, if he was a Maukhari, that he ruled some time before Yaśovarman.

The Asirgadh Seal inscription which traces the genealogy of the Maukharis down to Sarvavarman does not mention Suryavarman, and the reason is easily perceptible. It omits

¹ A. S. I. R., XVII, pp. 57 ff.

² Suryavarman is assigned to about the eighth century A. D. He was a contemporary of Chandra Gupta of Kosala, to whose son, Harsha Gupta, he gave his daughter Vasata in marriage. (Cf. E. I., XI, p. 185).

Suryavarman because he never ascended the throne¹. He must have been a younger son, or, if he was the elder, he must have predeceased his father. On the other hand the Hārāhā inscription omits the name of Śārvavarman, but mentions Suryavarman, not, however, as a king, but as a prince. The reason why it omits Śārvavarman is either because Suryavarman and not he was the *hen-apparent* when the inscription was engraved—that is, as we have already seen, a few years after the accession of Īśānavarman; or because, even if he was the elder son, the object of the inscription was to record the reconstruction of a temple by Suryavarman. Another very reasonable solution is the one proposed by Aravamuthan². A civil war might have followed the death of Īśānavarman, and in the fight for the throne Suryavarman might have been worsted by his brother. A civil war after the death of Īśānavarman was quite possible in consequence of the troubled state of the country after Īśānavarman's defeat at the hands of Kumāra Gupta III towards the close of his reign. There is yet another probability which ought not to be despised. The Mālwā Guptas were making a determined bid for supremacy. There was danger that the imperial title might be wrested by them from the Maukharis. Īśānavarman, therefore, seeing Śārvavarman more competent to preserve the integrity of the Maukhari dominions, might have overlooked the claims of Suryavarman and nominated Śārvavarman his successor. The Harāhā inscription seems to corroborate this theory. It depicts Suryavarman as a highly accomplished young man, "calm and devoted to the study of the *Śāstras*", "proficient in fine arts, "to whom Wealth, Fame Learning and other (muses) resorted as if in emulation". He is also depicted as handsome, youthful and chaste and as

¹ That Suryavarman never mounted the throne is also proved by the fact that no coin bearing his name has yet been found. The Harāhā inscription, however, does not say whether he was the *hen* or whether he had any claims to the throne.

² Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 92.

dispelling the darkness that originated in the advent of the Iron Age. But the inscription does not seem to be in any way enthusiastic over his abilities as a warrior¹. How then could such a one have been appointed in the face of such lowering war-clouds. It may be proposed, perhaps, that Suryavarman and Śarvavarman are identical; but the lettering both in the inscription and the coins is so clear that the two readings are indisputable.

As it has already been remarked, the object of the Harāhā inscription was to record the reconstruction of a temple. It was an old and dilapidated² temple of the Slayer of Andhaka (Śiva) which Suryavarman came across one day while he was out a-hunting. He desired that it should be rebuilt, and his wishes were promptly carried out, the temple being made much higher than it originally was and white like the moon. Suryavarman called it by the name of *Kshemeśvara* (the Lord of Bliss).

¹ *E I.*, XIV, p. 120. This theory will gain in strength if we remember that the selection of a younger son in preference to the eldest was not an unknown practice in that country in those early days. We have two similar outstanding cases in the nominations of Samudra Gupta and Chandra Gupta II.

² The inscription adds that Suryavarman was always generous to the submissive and the low.

CHAPTER VI

Sarvavarman, the Maukhari

Isānavarman was followed on the throne by his son Śarvavarman, begotten of the Bhattārka and Mahādevī Lakshmiṃvatī¹. The Asirgadh Seal inscription calls him "the most devout worshipper of (the god) Maheśvara"². The same inscription gives him the *cognomen* "the Maukhari"³. This seems to indicate that Śarvavarman was able to keep intact the territories conquered by his illustrious father and to preserve in all its integrity the prestige of the Maukhari family. The fact that only the Asirgadh Seal inscription of Śarvavarman designates Harivarman, Ādityavarman and Śīvaravarman as *mahārājas* may mean that Śarvavarman thought it below his dignity to claim descent from an ordinary *sāmanta* or *nr̥pa*, and therefore elected to bestow upon them a more respectable title⁴. He himself is styled a *Mahārājādhirāja* in the Asirgadh Seal⁵, whilst the Deo-Baranāik inscription of a later Gupta King, Jivita Gupta II, calls him

¹ Fleet, *G. I*, p. 231. Prinsep, *J. A. S. B.*, V, p. 484, read the name as Bhara Kamahari, and Wilkins, *J. R. A. S.*, III, p. 379, as Harshini

² Fleet, *G. I*, p. 221.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Cf. Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 86.

⁵ This title is also given to his father Isanavarman.

the Parameśvara the glorious. This evidently shows that Śarvavarman was a paramount sovereign, to whom homage was due from all the kings of Northern India. He had more than fulfilled the expectations of his father, who, as has been suggested, might have nominated him his successor in the dark hour of his death in preference to Śuryavarman, the rightful heir to the throne.

The Aḥśad inscription tells us that Dāmodara Gupta, the son of Kumāra Gupta III, broke up "the proudly stepping array of mighty elephants belonging to the Maukharī"¹. The inscription unfortunately does not name who this Maukharī was. But the Aśirgaḥ Seal inscription, where Śarvavarman is given the appellation "the Maukharī", comes to our aid, and we may conclude that it was the Maukharī Śarvavarman whom Dāmodara Gupta engaged in battle. The epithet "the Maukharī" may also be interpreted otherwise. It might refer to Iśānavarman who is mentioned immediately before as having been defeated by Kumāra Gupta.² But the first proposition appears to be more probable, Dāmodara Gupta apparently being a contemporary of Śarvavarman, inasmuch as his father was a contemporary of Iśānavarman.³ Though the Aḥśad inscription, which is a Gupta epigraph, apparently suggests that Dāmodara Gupta was successful, the virtual victory seems to have been Śarvavarman's for the Gupta King "became unconscious and expired in the fight".⁴

Another political force that had to be reckoned with in Northern India in the days of Śarvavarman was that of the

¹ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 218. Between the epithet *Parameśvara* and the name Śarvavarman there is a little break, the lost letter most probably is *Sri*.

² *Ibid.*, p. 206.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

⁴ Raychaudhury, *H. A. I.*, p. 372, note, thinks it probable that Śuryavarman was the Maukharī opponent of Damodara Gupta.

⁵ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 206. Vide Niharranjan Ray, *Calcutta Review*, XXVI, p. 209, who incorrectly supposes that the Guptas were still in possession of Magadha, which they only lost after the ignominious defeat of Damodara Gupta.

Hunas The Hunas with whom the previous Maukharis had dealings were in all probability those who, according to Huen Tsiang, had remained in Central India. But from the extent of Śarvavarman's sway as far north as Nirmaṇḍ we may conclude that the Hūnas defeated by Śarvavarman were those of Kāśmīr, against whom Prabhākaravardhana of Thānesar had to engage in the time of Śarvavarman's successor, Avantivarman. These people profited by the disturbed state of Magadha consequent on Īśānavarman's death to make a bid for supremacy at the expense of Śarvavarman. But the Maukharī King was able to keep these troublous people at bay, as is testified by the Aḥsād inscription which declares that the array of Maukharī elephants that engaged the array of Dāmodara Guṇḍa had previously "thrown aloft in battle the troops of the Hūnas (in order to trample them to death)"¹. This was indeed a signal service rendered by Śarvavarman not only to Magadha but also to the neighbouring states of Northern India.

If we take the localities of the inscriptions that speak of Śarvavarman as indicative of the extent of his power, it seems to have comprehended a very large area. At Nirmaṇḍ, a village on the right bank of the Sutlej, a copper-plate inscription was recovered which records that a certain Śarvavarman made a grant of land in that village to the village temple, dedicated to the god Kapāleśvara. The record, however, is not one of Śarvavarman himself, it belongs to a later king. The date of the record is the year six, and it can hardly be said to what era the date refers. Most likely it is the regnal year of Samudrasena, to whom the record belongs; and Fleet assigns the period of the inscription roughly to the seventh century A. D.². As we know of no other Śarvavarman, who lived at about this time, we may identify the

¹ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 206. Cunningham, *A. S. I. R.*, XV, p. 165, has misread this passage, and according to his interpretation Dāmodara Guṇḍa is said to have encountered "at the battle of Mausharī, the fierce army of the western Hunas".

² Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 287.

Sarvavarman of the Nirmand copper plate with Sarvavarman Maukharī¹. We may further assume that Sarvavarman's dominions extended westwards as far as the easternmost tributaries of the Indus including perhaps even the country of Sthānviśvara (Thānesar) which was at this time being ruled by Ādityavardhana².

The Asirgadh Seal of Sarvavarman likewise induces us to believe that Asirgadh was a Maukharī possession³. But we have no direct evidence to assert this. That the Seal was one used in the time of Sarvavarman himself is sufficiently patent. But it might have been issued elsewhere than at Asirgadh whither it might have accidentally drifted. Nevertheless, there is one fact that lends support to the theory that Asirgadh was included in the kingdom of the Maukharis. This is the defeat by Śīśvaravarman of the king of Dhārā and the king who sought safety in the Vindhya Mountains. It is very likely that Śīśvaravarman even went beyond the Vindhyas in pursuit of the fleeing king, and that all these territories round about the Vindhyas were finally annexed by him to his kingdom. Asirgadh is situated in this territory, being separated from Dhārā only by the Vindhyas. In such a case we might expect that the lost portions of the Jaunpur inscription contained some particulars regarding the conquest of Asirgadh.

Another inscription that speaks of Śarvavarman is the

¹ We cannot say that Nirmand became a Maukharī possession in the reign of Sarvavarman. It might have been a conquest of Śīśvaravarman or even, though not so very likely, of Śarvavarman.

² Cf. Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, pp. 93 and 101.

³ On the score of the similarity of the device on the Asirgadh Seal and on two of the Nalanda seals Aravamuthan ascribes the Nalanda seals also to Sarvavarman (*op. cit.*, p. 87). But the device was not one of Sarvavarman himself; it is an emblem of the family, and several of the other seals I observed at Nalanda were attributed in the register of the Nalanda Museum to various kings of the family.

Deo-Baranark inscription of Jivita Gupta II. The inscription records the continuance of the grant of a village, either Vārunikā or Kiśoravātaka, to the sun under the title of Varunavāsin. Both the names Vārunikā and Kiśoravātaka are mentioned in the inscription. Perhaps Kiśoravātaka was the original name of the village, which after its donation to Varunavāsin assumed the name Vārunikā, which evidently in turn was gradually corrupted first into Deva-Baranaka and then into Deo-Baranārk¹. The grant confirmed by Jivita Gupta II had been confirmed before him, by earlier kings on at least three occasions, for the names of three kings are legible. The first is that of Balāditya which is followed by those of the Maukharis Śarvavarman and Anantavarman. The inscription is important because it proves that the Maukharis succeeded Balāditya in power in the Deo-Baranārk region, not a word being said about their later Gupta contemporaries in connection with the previous grants of the village.

Anyone studying carefully the various facts connected with the reign of Śarvavarman will find the impression being steadily borne in upon him, that he was undoubtedly a great monarch, whose suzerainty was acknowledged throughout practically the whole of Northern India. There were only two powers that made bold to defy his authority, the Guptas and the Hūṇas, but the attempts of both were checkmated and they had to return home humbled and subservient. No-

¹ Deo-Baranark is about twenty-five miles south-west of Arrah, the chief town of the Shahabad District in the Bihar and Orissa Province. The charter bestowing the grant was issued from Gomatikottaka a fort evidently somewhere along the river Gomati, the modern Gumti, flowing eighty-five miles to the west of Deo-Baranark.

² Cunningham, *A. S. I. R.*, XVI, p. 64, reports that when he visited the place one man asserted that the true name was Deo-Banaras, which he says is the spoken form of Varunivasa. But it seems pretty sure that the real name was Varunika, for very little reliance can be placed in the evidence of these unlettered villagers. When I was in the village, one man gave the name as Deo-Baran, and another as Deo-Banarak.

thing is heard of the Āndhras and the Gaudas in Śarvavarman's time, they had evidently learnt a bitter lesson at the hands of Īśānavarman who had curbed all their venturesome spirit, and they had not the audacity now to hazard another encounter with the Maukhari forces. Nirmaṇḍ, Raivataka, Asirgadh and the Brahmaputrā may therefore well define the extent of Śarvavarman's supremacy.

CHAPTER VII

Was Susthitavarman a Maukhari?

Though the answer to this query is patent to anyone who studied all the available evidence, nevertheless it is astonishing to find so much energy spent in trying to prove what is frankly inadmissible.

Susthitavarman is mentioned in the Apsad inscription as having been defeated by Mahāsenā Gupta. It is important to remember that this defeat of Susthitavarman follows immediately after an account of two contests between the Maukharis and the Guptas—the first, Isānavarman *versus* Kumāra Gupta; and the second, Śārvavarman *versus* Dāmodara Gupta—because this precise alignment of facts is one of the reasons adduced in favour of the contention that Susthitavarman was a Maukhari and the successor of Śārvavarman¹. It is also necessary to quote *in toto* the passage that refers to the defeat of Susthitavarman by Mahāsenā Gupta, because the answer to the question is to a large extent determined by the interpretation of the passage. The inscription says: the mighty fame of Mahāsenā Gupta “marked with the honour of victory in war over the illus-

¹ Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 25, invents another theory. It is probable, he says, that Susthitavarman was only a namesake of the Kamarupa king and was really a Maukhari. Hoernle, *J. A. S. B.*, LVIII, thinks it also possible that Susthitavarman is identical with Avantivarman.

trious Susthitavarman (and) white as a full blown jasmine flower or water lily or as a pure necklace of pearls pounded into little bits, is still constantly sung on the banks of (the river) Lōhitya, the surfaces of which are (so) cool, by the Siddhas in pairs, when they wake up after sleeping in the shade of the betel-plants that are in full bloom"¹. The mention of the Lauhitya (Brahmaputrā) should have been enough to connect Susthitavarman with Āssām. If Susthitavarman had been a Maukharī king, it is difficult to understand why Mahāsena's victory should be celebrated on the distant banks of the Lauhitya. It might be argued that it was merely the fame of Mahāsena Gupta's glorious victory that had reached Āssām, and that the battle was actually fought elsewhere². But the context of the inscription does not warrant such an interpretation which really belongs to the realm of poetry³. It clearly tends to show, on the contrary, that the battle was fought on or very near the banks of the Lauhitya (*Lōhityasya taṭēshu*) where the glory of the Gupta king's victory is even now (*adyāpi*) being sung (*gīyatē*) or remembered.

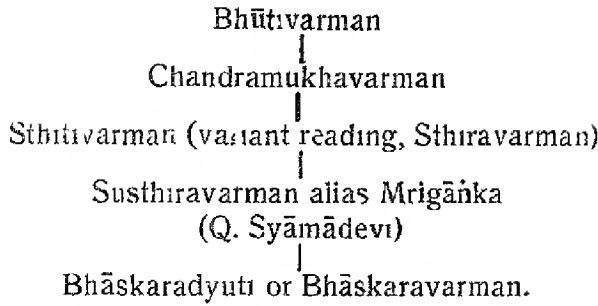
When we bring this statement into a combination with the fact that there was a king of Āssām who certainly was a contemporary of Mahāsena Gupta, and who bore the name of Susthitavarman, it is difficult to ignore the accumulative worth of all this evidence and to conclude otherwise than that Mahāsena Gupta defeated Susthitavarman of Kāmarupa or Āssām in a battle on the banks of the Lauhitya or Brahmaputrā. We have three different sources from which we can learn that Susthitavarman was a king of Kāmarupa: the first is the *Harsha Charita* of Bāṇa, the second is the Nidhanpur Copper-plate grants of Bhāskaravarman, and the third is the Nālandā Seal of Bhāskaravarman. The genealogy given in each of the three sources is as follows:—

¹ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 206.

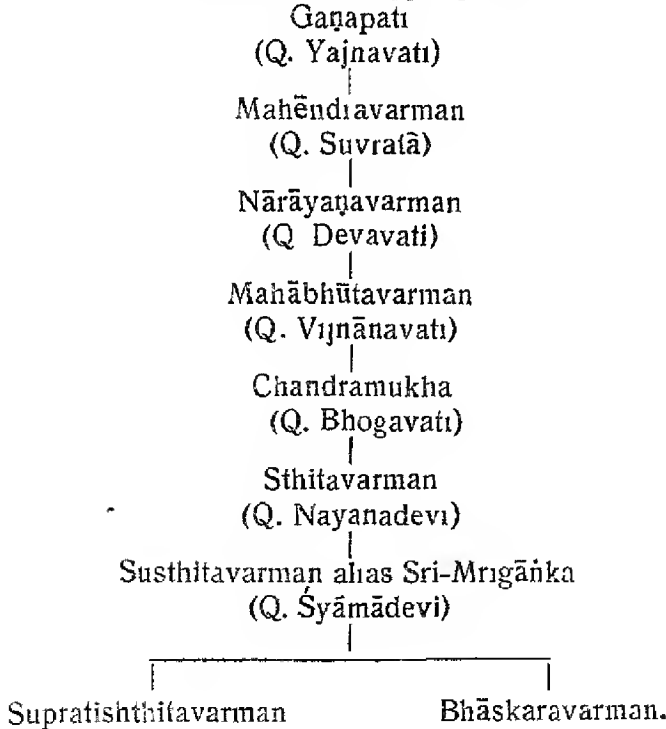
² Mookerji, *J. B. O. R. S.*, XV, p. 255, opines that a difference must be made between the extent of actual conquest and the extent to which the fame of that conquest, its echoes and reverberations could travel.

³ Cf. Banerji, *J. B. O. R. S.*, XIV, p. 261.

*The "Harsha Charita"*¹



*The Nidhanpur Copper-plates*²



¹ *Op cit.*, p 21/ The names of the mythological kings Naraka, Bhagadatta, Pushpadatta and Vajradatta have been omitted here

² *E. I.*, XII, p 69 The mythological ancestors and four generations previous to Gaṇapati varman may be excluded here

The Nālanda Seal

(Gaṇapati)varma

Q. Yajña(na)vati

|

(Mahēndravarman)

Q. (Suvra)tā

|

Nārāyaṇavarman

Q. (De)vavati

|

(Mahābhūtarman)

Q. (Viṣṇānava)tī

|

Chandramukhavarman

Q. Bho(gavati)

|

(Sthitava)rman

Q. Nayanaśobhā

|

(Susthitavarman)

Q. (Syāmā)lakshmi

|

Supratishthita(varman)

(Bhā)skavarman

On a comparison of all these three sources, we find that there are very slight differences. Evidently Sthiravarman and Susthiravarman of the *Harsha Charita* are misreadings for Sthitavarman and Susthitavarman. The mother of Susthitavarman is also slightly differently named by the Nidhanpur plate and the Nālandā Seal, the former calling her Nayanadevi and the latter Nayanaśobhā. But a similar

¹ *J. B. O. R. S.*, VI, pp. 151-152. The seal is much damaged, and the readings within brackets have been restored by consulting the Nidhanpur plates. These plates were issued from camp at Karnasuvarna (Gauda), indicating that Karnasuvarna belonged to Bhaskaravarman, but more of this anon.

example of a difference in the termination of a name exists in early Gupta history. The name of the Queen of Chandra Gupta II and the mother of Kumāra Gupta I is Dhruvadevi in the inscriptions, but her full name as found by Bloch in one of his Basarh seals was Dhruvasvāminī¹. Another instance where the name ending is different is that of Queen Śyāmādevī who is called Śyāmālakṣmī in the Nālandā Seal. Nevertheless, all the three records agree in making Sushitavarman the father of Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarupa; and this is all that matters in our identification of Sushitavarman of Kāmarupa as the antagonist of Mahāsenā Gupta. For the *Harsha Charita* tells us that Bhāskaravarman was an ally, and therefore a contemporary of Harshavardhana², who was himself a companion and contemporary of Mādhava Gupta. Mādhava Gupta's father Mahāsenā Gupta, therefore, without any difficulty becomes the contemporary of Sushitavarman³. After having mustered and reconciled the evidence of the Aṃśad inscription, the Nidhanpur plates and the *Harsha Charita* and perceived the perfect accord in the chronology there can hardly be any doubt that the victim of Mahāsenā Gupta was a Kāmarupa king and not a Maukhari, the latter surmise being "not only a baseless assumption but also a needless superfluity"⁴. A very effective argument to prove that Sushitavarman was not a Maukhari—an argument hitherto unthought of by any historian—is that no coins of any Maukhari king called Sushitavarman have been recovered, whilst we have some specimens of both Śarvavarman and Avantivarman, the supposed predecessor and successor respectively of that king.

¹ A. S. I. R., 1903-4, p. 107, plate XI

² *Harsha Charita*, p. 218. It is therefore in the fitness of things, as Mr Dikshit remarks (*J. B. O. R. S.*, VI, p. 151), that a seal of Bhaskaravarman should have been found in the company of two fragmentary seals of the emperor Harsha. Even Huen Tsiang shows that Bhaskaravarman was a friend of the great emperor (Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, II, p. 198).

³ Cf. Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 94.

⁴ *Ibid.*

Again, whereas both Sarvavarman and Avantivarman and perhaps even Grahavarman¹ are mentioned in the Deo-Baranārk inscription in connection with a grant, the name of Sasthitavarman finds no place in it. How could it, when it had no connection whatever with Deo-Baranārk?

Having admitted that Susihitavarman was a King of Kāmarupa, some historians find it difficult to admit that Mahāsenā Gupta was a King of Mālhwā. They prefer to make him a King of Magadha because otherwise it would not have been possible for him, a King of Mālhwā, to have marched to Āssām without incurring the displeasure of the different kings through whose territories he had to pass. Mr. Raychaudhury solves the difficulty by supposing that Mahāsenā Gupta's sway extended from Mālhwā to the Brahmaputā². But such a supposition is untenable. The passage in the inscription does not indicate that his actual conquests had extended up to the Brahmaputā³. Avantivarman, the Maukharī contemporary of Mahāsenā Gupta, still held sway in Magadha⁴, and was still the paramount sovereign of Northern India⁵, and there is no evidence to show that Magadha had passed into Gupta hands. There is, however, sufficient testimony to show that Mahāsenā Gupta was still only a King of Mālhwā. The *Harsha Charita* plainly tells us that the Thānesar King, Prabhākaravardhana, brought to his court two sons of the Mālhwā King, Kumāra Gupta and Mādhava Gupta to be the companions of his two sons Rājya and Harsha⁶. The *Harsha Charita*, however, does not say who

¹ Raychaudury, *H. A. I.*, p. 361.

² Cf. Mookerji, *J. B. O. R. S.*, XV, p. 255, Banerji, *J. B. O. R. S.*, XIV, p. 260.

³ Cf. Deo-Baranark inscription of Jivita Gupta (Fleet, *G. I.*, pp. 213-218).

⁴ The Deo-Baranark inscription calls him "the Paramesvara" (Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 218).

⁵ *Harsha Charita*, 119. Though the historical value of the *Harsha Charita* has been well established (Cf. Mookerji, *J. B. O. R. S.*, XV, pp. 153-4), Mr. Banerji, (*J. B. O. R. S.*, XIV, pp. 255-265) brushes aside this valuable piece of intelligence afforded by Bana, and comes to the conclusion that Mahasena Gupta was a ruler of Magadha.

this king of Malwa was. But the Aphasad inscription solves the riddle when it affirms that Mahasena Gupta's son Madhava Gupta desired to associate himself with the glorious Harsha¹. On the common characterisation that the two Mādava Guptas were the companions of Harsha, we can surely conclude that they are identical; from which it naturally follows that Mahāsena Gupta was the King of Mālhwā who sent his sons to the Thānesar court².

Having proved that Mahāsena Gupta was a King of Mālhwā, we have to show how it was possible for a king of Mālhwā to reach the banks of the Lauhitya without strenuous opposition from the kings who governed the intervening region. The *Harsha Charita* avers that Susthitavarman was a powerful monarch "who took away the conch-shells of the lords of armies, not their jewels, grasped the stability of the earth, not its tribute, seized the majesty of monarchs not their hardness". It even gives to him the sovereign title of *Mahārajādhirāja*³. Evidently therefore the power of the Kāmarupa monarch was a threatening menace to the sovereignty of the Maukharis. On the other hand the Guptas of Mālhwā also with a view to enhance their authority had concluded a matrimonial alliance with the Thānesar family, by marrying their princess Mahāsena Gupta⁴ to Ādityavardhana. In the generation of Mahāsena Gupta there seems to have been no love lost between the Guptas and the Maukharis. On the contrary all the three houses of Thānesar, Magadha and Eastern Mālhwā seem to have joined hands in warding off the attacks of their common enemy, the Hūṇas. We can hardly know what was the cause of the hostility

¹ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 207.

² Though the *Harsha Charita* mentions two kings named Mahasena, neither of them seem to be Mahasena Gupta, the father of Madhava Gupta. One of them is mentioned in connection with a king of the Vatsa country (p. 192), and the other as a king of Kasi (p. 194).

³ *Harsha Charita*, p. 117.

⁴ Cf. Madhuban Grant, Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 73, and the *Sonpat Copper Seal Inscription*, *Ibid.*, p. 251-252.

between Mahāsena Gupta and Śaṣṭavarman. But one fact seems to be true: when Mahāsena Gupta decided to wage war against the Kāmarupa King, the Maukhari monarch must have been only too glad that the Mālwa King had taken upon himself the dangerous task of subduing the imperial ambitions and humbling the "unborn pride"² of the far eastern potentate. Not satisfied with this, the Magadha emperor might have even lent some assistance and encouragement to Mahāsena Gupta to carry out a plan which would ensure him the safe enjoyment of the imperial dignity. There was no difficulty, therefore, for Mahāsena Gupta, to march across Magadha. But beyond Magadha there was the country of the Gauḍas. We cannot say that Mahāsena Gupta must have defeated the Gauḍas *en route* to Kāmarupa. The panegyrist of the Aḥṣad inscription would not have omitted to mention this victory. But the Gauḍas were subservient feudatories of the Maukharis ever since the days of Iśānavarman, and they would not dare to oppose Mahāsena Gupta, the Maukhari ally, in his passage to the Lauhitya. Prof. Mookerji objects that Mahāsena Gupta could not have attacked an ally of Harsha, the King of Kāmarupa³. But he forgets that Harsha was not the contemporary of Mahāsena Gupta, and that the Harsha Bhāskaravarman alliance only came about after Harsha's accession to the throne.

¹ Cf. Vasu, *The Social History of Kamarupa*, I, pp. 144-146.

² Cf. *Harsha Charita*, p. 217.

³ *J. B. O. R. S.*, XV, p. 254.



Deo-Baranārka Inscription of Jīvita Gupta II.

CHAPTER VIII

Avantivarman

We have only one inscription that records the name of this Maukhari King—the Deo-Baranārka inscription of Jivita Gupta II, which speaks of him as having confirmed a grant to a temple, which grant had previously been confirmed first by Balāditya Gupta and then by Śarvavarman Maukhari. From the confirmation of the grant previously by Śaryavarman it may be inferred that Avantivarman succeeded Śarvavarman. Avantivarman's coins too, of which not many are available, seem to put this question beyond any doubt¹. Avantivarman is also mentioned in the *Harsha Charita* as the Maukhari King whose son Grahavarman was married to Rājyaśrī, the sister of Harshavardhana². The Deo-Baranārka inscription and the story of Bāṇa therefore supplies the all-important connecting link between Śarvavarman and Grahavarman³.

¹ Cf. Chapter on “*The Coinage and the Chronology of the Maukharis*”

² *Harsha Charita*, p. 122 With Avantivarman opened an eventful chapter in the history of Aryavarta—intertwined with matrimonial relations and diplomatic alliances—which only ended with the beginning of the overlordship of Harsha

³ It is almost certain that the Avantivarman of the *Harsha Charita* is identical with Avantivarman of Jivita Gupta's inscription. It is not possible that two powerful Maukhari families were ruling at the same time.

We can hardly say with any positiveness in what relation Avantivarman stood with Śarvavarman. In all probability he was his son. But it is also possible that he was his nephew, being the son of Suryavarman, Śarvavarman's brother.¹

The Deo-Baranāik inscription calls Avantivarman 'the Paramēśvara'², and this cannot be merely a baseless panegyric, for the inscription belongs to a king of a different dynasty. Evidently, therefore, Avantivarman enjoyed more or less equal power as his predecessor, Śarvavarman. There is no extant record of any of his achievements. Perhaps, during his reign, the country settled down to an era of comparative peace and prosperity after so many years of almost ceaseless strife and wrangling. Nevertheless there was one power still actively at work endeavouring to effect a come-back to its pristine glory, and thus vexing the general tranquillity of the country. This was the Hūṇa power, to whom, as the *Harsha Charita* declares, Prabhākaravardhana was a "very lion". Prabhākaravardhana, who was a contemporary of Avantivarman, and the ruler of Thānesar was a very able King. He was to a large extent responsible for keeping the western powers in check³, and thus bringing the Pushpabhuti family to which he belonged into prominence. Ādityavardhana, his father, had already married a Gupta princess Mahāsena Gupta⁴. Prabhākara was also on friendly terms

¹ Vaidya, *History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, I, p. 39, thinks that Avantivarman was Sarvavarman's grandson. Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maikharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 99, even doubts whether the two belonged to the same family.

² Fleet, *G I*, p. 218.

³ The *Harsha Charita*, p. 102, says that Prabhākara was famed far and wide under a second name Pratapasila, a lion to the Huna deer, a burning fever to the king of the Indus land, a troubler of the sleep of Gujarat, a bilious plague to that scent-elephant the lord of Gandhara, a looter to the lawlessness of the Jats, an axe to the creeper of Malwa glory.

⁴ She is supposed by many to have been a sister of king Mahasena Gupta, the son of Damodara Gupta. More probably she was a sister of Damodara Gupta, as she belongs to his generation. Cf. Pandurang Shastri Parakhi, *Life of Harsha* (in Marathi)

with the Maukharis as is seen from the fact that he elected a Maukhari king as a husband for his daughter Rājyaśrī. It would therefore appear as if the Hūṇas were not given much rope during Avantivarman's time. All these powers must have joined hands to keep the Hūṇas at a distance¹.

Another important event that occurred in the reign of Avantivarman was the defeat of the Kāmarupa King, Susthita-varman, by Mahāsenā Gupta of Mālwa. As we have seen in the last chapter, Avantivarman was to some extent at least responsible for the defeat of this eastern ruler. Though he did not take an active part in the contest, he did not remain an entirely passive spectator either, he at least encouraged the Mālwa King in his enterprise and perhaps even helped him with men and money, hoping to find the growing power of the Kāmarupa King nipped in the bud without running the risk of a battle and a defeat.

Aravamuthan believes that Avantivarman was the patron of Viśākhādatta², the author of the famous Sāṅskṛit play, the *Mudrārākṣha*³. Mr. Jayaswal, however, holds that the play is a work of the time of Chandra Gupta II⁴. The cause of so much controversy over the subject is the discovery of the reading Rantivarmā instead of Chandra Gupta in the *Bharata-vākya*, occurring in some manuscripts. An argument supported by Sten Konow is that the play must have been written before the destruction of Pāṭaliputra, because that town plays such a great role in the play⁵. But such a description could easily have been borrowed from other works of the Gupta period. Moreover, Pāṭaliputra continued to be the capital of Magadha even in the time of Avantivarman⁶. Another such

¹ Cf. Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 60.

² Viśakhadatta was the son of one Bhaskaravarman but the rest of his genealogy does not agree with that of King Bhaskaravarman of Kamarupa.

³ Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 95. Rapson, *J. R. A. S.*, 1900, pp. 535-536, entertains the same opinion.

⁴ *I. A.*, XLII, p. 265 ff.

⁵ *I. A.*, XLIII, p. 67.

⁶ Cf. Chapter on "*The Capital of the Maukharis*".

poetry argument is advanced by another scholar to prove that the play belongs to the seventh century A. D. He points out a similarity both in idea and wording between some of the verses of the *Mudrārākṣhaśa* and those of the Mandasor Pillar inscription of Yaśodharman. For all we know it was the composer of the *prāśasti* of the inscription who borrowed his ideas from the *Mudrārākṣhaśa*, and not *vice versa*. We can hardly be sure, therefore, of the date of the play. It, however, it was a work of Avantivarman's reign, it speaks much of Avantivarman as a patron of literature and learning.



Grahavarman

It is to Bāṇa that we have to be grateful for narrating to us the history of this Maukharī King, whose name even is not to be found in any of the inscriptions that have so far been discovered. There is, however, one inscription which in all probability did speak of Grahavarman, but the first half of the name has disappeared, and only the termination *varman* remains. It is the Deo-Baranārī inscription of Jīvita Gupta II, in which the name *varman* is legible after the names of Śarvavarman and Avantivarman as the name of a king who confirmed a grant to the Sun¹

Bāṇa in his *Harsha Charita* tells us that Grahavarman was the eldest son of Avantivarman. When Prabhākaravardhana, the Thānesar King, is choosing a husband for his daughter Rājyaśrī, he says to his Queen: "Of that race's pride, Avantivarman, the eldest son, Grahavarman by name, who lacks not his father's virtues, a prince like the lord of planets descended upon earth, seeks our daughter. Upon him, if your majesty's thoughts are likewise favourable, I propose to bestow her"². From this passage and from another statement which says that an envoy had been sent to the Thānesar court "with instructions from Grahavarman to sue for the

¹ Cunningham, *A S I. R.*, XVI, p. 78.

² *Harsha Charita.*, pp. 122-123.

princess¹, it appears as if Avantivarman was not living at the time of his son's marriage; otherwise it would have been very presumptuous on the part of Grahavarman to have carried out such negotiations when his father was living.

Grahavarman and Rājyaśrī were married with due éclat and ceremony. Bāṇa's description of the preparations for the marriage-feast is as detailed as it is exquisite². "Even kings girt up their loins and busied themselves carrying out decorative work set as tasks by the sovereign". "From the farthest orient came the queens of all the feudatories". An air of expectancy filled the capital till "calculated as it were by the people's fingers, watched for by the banners on the highways, welcomed by reverberations of auspicious music, invoked by astrologers, attracted by wishes, embraced by the hearts of the bride's women friends, the marriage day arrived".

But apparently the astrologers had miscalculated the auspicious hour, for misfortune soon betell the royal couple. We shall deal with the events in chronological order. Rājyavardhana, the heir-apparent to the Thānesar throne was despatched by his father's express command on an expedition to the north against the Hūṇas³. His younger brother Harsha followed him for several stages, but after some time he stayed behind on the skirts of the Himālayas to indulge in the pleasures of the chase. One day, however, a domestic named Kuraṅgaka brought intelligence to the prince that the King was critically ill, suffering from "a violent fever"⁴. Harsha rushed back post-haste to the capital, and then sent messengers to his brother Rājya to hasten home, but before

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Ibid.*, pp. 123-131

³ *Ibid.*, p. 132. Prabhakara, it appears (*vide Ibid.*, p. 101), had already waged war against the Hunas and subdued them, but they again got out of control towards the end of his reign.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 133-134. Hall, *Vasavadatta*, p. 52, points out that Huen Tsiang, in M. Julien's version, does not say that Prabhakara-vardhana died a natural death, but that he was assassinated by Sasanka who had come from Karnasuvarna

Rājya could return the King had breathed his last. This however was not the only grief they had to suffer, for a couple of days later Samvādaka, a servant of Rājyaśrī, entered the palace with the doleful news that Grahavarman had been "cut off from the living along with his noble deeds by the wicked lord of Mālhwā", and that Rājyaśrī had "been confined like a brigand's wife with a pair of iron fetters kissing her feet, and cast into prison at Kānyakubja". The messenger also gave Rājya to understand that the villain intended to invade and seize Thānesar¹.

Seized with a paroxysm of wrath Rājyavardhana determined to avenge his brother-in-law's murderer. He deeply resented the insult inflicted on his sister, and his pent-up anger burst forth in words full of disdain: "Mālhwās to maltreat the race of Pushpabhuti — this is the hind clutching the lion's mane, the frog slapping the cobra, the calf taking the tiger captive, the water-serpent grasping Garuda by the throat, the log bidding burn the fire, the darkness hiding the sun!"². Forthwith he ordered the marching drums to sound, and bidding his brother Harsha stay behind, at the head of his fighting-men and with Bhandi as a companion he marched against the lord of Mālhwā to wipe out in the miscreant's blood the insult offered to his family. Rājyavardhana was successful in his military campaign against the Mālhwā king whom he surprised and routed with "ridiculous ease", but the triumph of his victory was short-lived, for soon afterwards he was "allured to confidence by false civilities on the part of the king of Gauda, and then weaponless, confiding, and alone, despatched (or killed) in his own quarters"³.

The news was conveyed to Harsha by a chief officer of cavalry named Kuntala, whereupon, as Bāṇa says, the prince

¹ *Ibid*, p. 173

² *Ibid.*, p. 175.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 178. R. P. Chanda, *Gauda-Rajamala*, pp. 7 ff. however, does not believe that Sasanka could have been so treacherous. Mazumdar, *The Early History of Bengal*, pp. 17-18, also holds the same view, and declares that both Bana and Hiuen Tsiang were biased against Sasanka.

became a youthful *avatar* of fury and summoned Skanda Gupta, the commandant of the elephant troop. So the elephant herds were called out of the pasture ground, and on the appointed day the army marched forth to avenge Deva Gupta. One day, while they were on the march, however, Bhandi arrived with the Mālhwā king's whole camp—elephants, horses, warriors and female attendants—conquered by the might of Rājyavardhana's arm, and an enormous booty including lion thrones, couches, settees, a white umbrella, pearl necklaces, ornaments of divers kinds, and heavy laden treasure-chests. Harsha, however, did not follow up the advantage which he had won², but learning from Bhandi that Queen Rājyasrī had burst from her confinement³ and with her train had entered the Vindhyan forest, he decided to go in search of his sister⁴. It was however with very great difficulty and after a very long search that Harsha was able to discover his sister just in time to rescue her from mounting the funeral pyre⁵.

There are however a few points in connection with all these events that require elucidation. In the first place the murderer of Grahavarman is not named by the *Harsha Charita*. We are simply told that he was a Gupta King and a King of Mālhwā. But we know from the Madhuban and Banskhera inscriptions that a Gupta king named Deva Gupta was defeat-

¹ *Harsha Charita*, p. 179

² Though Bana does not say what became of Deva Gupta himself whether he escaped or was killed, it may be assumed that he was slain in the battle, else Harsha would have tracked him to death.

³ As Aravamuthan suggests, Rājyasrī must have been released from prison by an underling of the Gupta

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 224

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 225-250. From the fact that Harsha was yet a stripling when he made his famous ride in quest of his sister and that the marches of both Rājyasrī and Harsha were unimpeded, Aravamuthan rightly concludes that all that land through which they marched to the Vindhya must have been subject to Grahavarman (*The Kaveri, the Maikharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 97.)

ed by Rājyavardhana, and so we take this Deva Gupta to be the adversary of Grahavarman¹. The Madhuban copper-plate, for example puts the question beyond doubt by corroborating the evidence of Bāṇa as to how Rājyavardhana was treacherously murdered. The inscription records that Rājya "in battle curbed Deva Gupta and all the other kings together, like vicious horses made to turn away from the lashes of the whip" Then "having uprooted his adversaries, having conquered the earth, having acted kindly towards the people, he through his trust in promises, lost his life in the enemy's quarters"². An informing light on Deva Gupta's "vicious" character is thrown by the savage treatment meted out to Rājyaśrī who was just a young girl, not more than about thirteen years of age.

Having ascertained that Deva Gupta was the lord of Mālhwā responsible for the untimely death of Grahavarman, we are confronted with the problem of locating his exact position in the genealogy of the Guptas. The Aphsad inscription of Ādityasena does not speak of Deva Gupta, nor is Deva Gupta mentioned in the Deo-Baranārka inscription which gives us a new line of Gupta kings beginning with Mādhava Gupta and ruling in Magadha. The commonly accepted theory is that Deva Gupta was the eldest son of Mahāsena Gupta and a brother of the two princes Kumāra Gupta and Mādhava Gupta, the companions of Rājyavardhana and Harshavardhana at the Thānesar court³. This

¹ *E. I.*, VII, pp. 155-160, IV, pp. 208-211. This Deva Gupta cannot be the Deva Gupta of the later Gupta dynasty of Magadha, as Harsha was a contemporary of Madhava Gupta, the grandfather of that Deva Gupta. Nor is he the Deva Gupta of the Vakataka inscriptions who has been identified with Chandra Gupta II.

² *E. I.*, VII, p. 159.

³ This was first suggested by Hoernle (*J. R. A. S.*, 1900, p. 253). Vaidya, *History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, I, p. 35, would have us believe that Kumāra Gupta and Madhava Gupta were the half-brothers of Deva Gupta or sons by another wife of Mahāsena Gupta. This would explain, he says, then enmity with Deva Gupta and their removal to the Thānesar court.

appointment of his two younger sons as the associates of the Thanesar princes might have been the dying arrangement of the Mālwa King. There is still another theory which deserves consideration. The eldest son of Mahāsena Gupta perhaps was not Deva Gupta, but Kumāra Gupta, who on the death of his father was deprived of his right of succession by the iniquitous and unscrupulous Deva Gupta. This surmise seems to be supported by Bāṇa, who contemptuously calls Deva Gupta a mere noble¹, or a man². In this way we might explain his total exclusion from mention in the genealogical list of the later Guptas, who evidently looked upon him as an usurper and a renegade of whom they had no reason to be proud³. Deprived of his throne and rejected from his kingdom Kumāra Gupta with his younger brother must have sought shelter and protection at the Thānesar court, which was gladly accorded to him by King Prabhākaravardhana⁴. Encouraged by this initial success Deva Gupta aspired after the imperial dignity⁵ and thought of extending his kingdom at the cost of his hereditary enemies, the Maukharis of Magadha. As the latter, however, were allied with the Pushyabhutis, Deva Gupta formed a counter-alliance with the Gaudas, whose hostility towards the Maukharis dated from the time of Śīśānavarman and who were only waiting for an opportunity to wreak their vengeance on them. It is also possible that Deva Gupta and Śaśānka were actuated by religious

¹ *Harsha Charita*, p. 251.

² *Ibid*, p. 224.

³ Kumara Gupta, though he was the eldest, could not be mentioned because in all probability he was with Rajya when the latter was treacherously murdered, and shared his miserable fate. However he is not subsequently heard of.

⁴ This would explain how the two princes of Malwa were living at the court of Harsha as his friends, whilst another prince was cultivating a different relationship. Bana also alludes to a strange story that Harsha rescued Kumara Gupta from the grasp of a frenzied elephant (*Harsha Charita*, p. 76, note).

⁵ Hoernle, *J. R. A. S.*, 1903, p. 564, wrongly identifying Deva Gupta of Malwa with Deva Gupta = Chandra Gupta II asserts that he actually assumed the imperial title.

motives in their hostility to Grahavarman and the Thanesar king as these monarchs evinced a favourable inclination for the Buddhist creed¹.

The *Harsha Charita* does not explicitly tell us who was the king of Gauḍa who espoused the cause of Deva Gupta. But Hiuen Tsiang mentions a certain Śaśāṅka, the King of Karnasuvarna, as the murderer of Rājyavardhana "At this time (of Rājyavardhana)," says Hiuen Tsiang, "the king of Karnasuvarna (Kie-lo-na-su-ṭa-la-na),—a kingdom of Eastern India—whose name was Śaśāṅka (She-shang-kia), frequently addressed his ministers in these words: 'If a frontier country has a virtuous ruler, this is the unhappiness of the (mother) kingdom'. On this they asked the king to a conference and murdered him"². The translators of the *Harsha Charita* also very ingeniously find an allusion to king Śaśāṅka in a paragraph which contains several significant allusions³, so that to all appearances Śaśāṅka was really the King of Gauḍa who assisted Deva Gupta in his campaign against the Maukharis and the Pushpabhutis⁴. That Śaśāṅka was a powerful King there can be no doubt⁵, but there is no warrant

¹ That Sasanka, in particular, was decidedly anti-Buddhist we shall see in the chapter on Purnavarmān.

² Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, I, p. 210. Cf. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, I, p. 343. The Sasankaraja of the plates of Samvat-Gupta 300 (vide Hultzsch, *E. I.*, VI, p. 143) is probably identical with this Sasanka of Karnasuvarna.

³ *Harsha Charita*, pp. 168, 275. The passage which reads "In the firmament the rising clear-flecked moon (*Sasanka*) shone like the pointed hump of Siva's bull, when blotted with mud scattered by his broad horns", seems to allude to the rising power of the Gauda King.

⁴ One manuscript of the *Harsha Charita* names him Narendra Gupta (vide Bühler, *E. I.*, I, p. 70). If this was his true name, Sasanka was probably only a *cognomen*. The termination *Gupta* would then suggest some kinship with Deva Gupta.

⁵ It is possible that there were two kings who bore the name Sasanka, one of them the contemporary of Harsha and another who ruled in the tenth century. The latter was probably a contemporary of the author of the *Naishada*, who is said to

concluding that he ruled over a vast empire. This much is certain, that whereas the fortunes of Mālhwā received a final overthrow in the defeat of Deva Gupta by Rājyavardhana the King of Gauda² could not be brought to submission before another thirteen years had elapsed³.

Hoernle believes that the King of Mālhwā who killed Navarman was not Deva Gupta but a certain Śilāditya

have recorded his biography. This work, however, is not extant and we can hardly know to whom it referred. Its name *Navasahasanka Charita* is all that remains, and it may either mean "a new biography of Sasanka" or "a biography of the new Sahasanka" (Cf. Mitra, *J. A. S. B.*, XXXIII, p. 327).

Chakravarti, *J. A. S. B.*, IV, (New Series), p. 275, believes that Karnasuvarna, Magadha, Kusinagara, Pundravardhana, Vanga, Suhma, Odra, Tamralipta, Trabhukti (Tirhat) and Kasi were all very likely included in this empire.

Prof. Bhandarkar (Cf. *J. R. A. S.*, 1905, p. 163) suggests that Gauda meant Gonda in Oudh. Jackson (*Ibid.*, p. 164) identifies Gauda with Thanesar. Both the identifications are highly absurd. A more precise location is that of the *Brihat Samhita*, XIV, 7, where the tribe Gaudaka is placed in the eastern division with the Paundras and the Tamraliptakas. Mr. Beveridge identifies Karnasuvarna, the country of the Gauda king according to Hsuen Tsiang, with Rangmati, near Berhampur in Bengal (vide *J. A. S. B.*, XII, p. 315), whilst the ruins of Karnasuvarna are supposed to have been discovered about twelve miles to the south of Murshidabad (vide *J. A. S. B.*, 1853, pp. 281-282). Fergusson, *J. R. A. S.*, (New Series), VI, p. 248, takes the kingdom of Karnasuvarna as comprehending the northern part of Burdwan, the whole of Birbhum and the province of Murshidabad including all those parts of the districts of Kishnaghur and Jessore which were then sufficiently raised above the waters of the Ganges to be habitable.

We know from the plates of Gupta-Samvat 300 (A. D. 619) that Sasanka was still ruling. In all probability he never submitted to Harsha before he died. Vaidya, *History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, I, p. 30, on the other hand, believes that Sasanka must have submitted to Harsha, who pardoned him and allowed him to retain his possessions.

who, according to Hsuen Tsiang¹, was ruling in Mo-la-po. At the same time he makes Deva Gupta the son of the Mālwa King Mahāsena Gupta, and, moreover, an ally of Śilāditya, fighting against the Maukhari-Pushpabhuti alliance. This Śilāditya is not mentioned in any inscription as an enemy of the Maukharis. Moreover, according to the testimony of Hsuen Tsiang, he could not be a contemporary of Grahavarman, for the Chinese traveller says that he ruled Mālwa about sixty years before his own time, about 580 A.D.². Again, it is wrong to suppose that Bāṇa uses the word 'Mālava' in more than one sense, though the 'Mālava' of Hsuen Tsiang and the 'Mālava' of Bāṇa may be different.

¹ The Mo-la-po of Hsuen Tsiang has been variously identified. Burn, *J. R. A. S.*, 1905, p. 838, places it in Gujarat. Sylvain Lévi (Cf *J. I. H.*, IV, part II, p. 25) identifies it with Valabhi. But it appears more probable that Mo-la-po means Western Malwa where Yasodharman came into prominence. Hsuen Tsiang gives to Śilāditya a reign of fifty years, which means that he must have been the immediate successor of Yasodharman.

² Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, I, p. 261

CHAPTER X

The Maukhari Kingdom

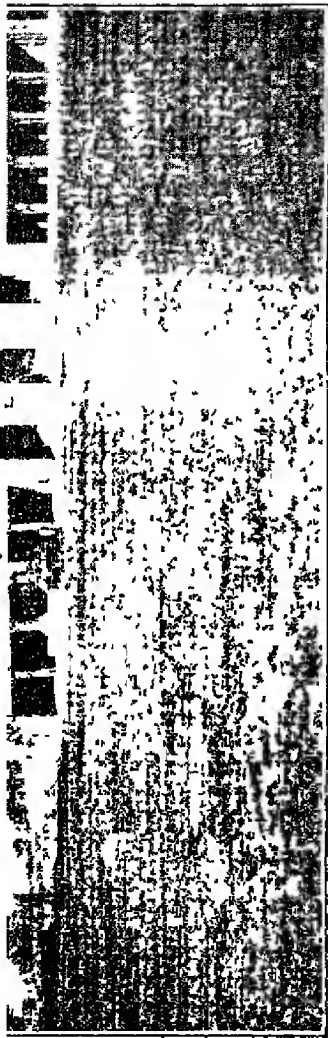
under Harshavardhana

After the untimely death of Rajyavardhana, his younger brother Harsha succeeded to the throne of Thānesar or Sthānviśvara, the capital of his ancestors¹. He forthwith set out to avenge the murder of his brother, but after the arrival of Bhandi with the spoils of the Malwa army, Harsha deputed him in pursuit of the Gauda king and he himself sallied into the impenetrable wilds of the Vindhyan range in quest of his beloved sister. He was, as seen before, successful in his search and arrived just in time to save the afflicted Rājyaśrī from committing *saṭī*.

On his return with Rājyaśrī to the Maukhari capital Harsha seems to have been puzzled as to whether he should mount the Maukhari throne or proclaim Rājyaśrī, the queen dowager, sovereign of the Maukhari kingdom. Besides Rājyaśrī, there seem to have been some younger heirs of Avantivarman², and Harsha could not easily consign them to obscurity. That Harsha entertained considerable scruples

¹ In all probability Harsha was the sole survivor of the Thanesar family, and his brother Rajya, who was still a youth when he was killed, had left no issue. Perhaps he was not even married, else Bana would not have failed to inform us about it.

² Purnavarman in all likelihood was one of them.



7. The Jaunpur Fort Mosque and a Dipastambha of the Old Hindu Temple in front of it.

about proclaiming himself the king of the Maukharī dominions is proved both by Bāṇa and Hiuen Tsiang, each one in his own way. Bāṇa tells us that "he was embraced by the goddess of the Royal Prosperity, who took him in her arms and, seizing him by all the royal marks on all his limbs, forced him, however reluctant, to mount the throne"¹ Hiuen Tsiang says that when the ministers of state deliberated with him and requested him to mount the throne, Harsha "modestly made excuses and seemed unwilling to comply with their request. When, however, they pressed him, he repaired to the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara for advice. An image of this Bodhisattva, which had made many spiritual manifestations stood in a grove of this district near the Ganges... After due fasting and prayer, he stated his case to the Bodhisattva. An answer was graciously given which told the prince that it was his good *karma* to become king, and that he should, accordingly, accept the offered sovereignty and then raise Buddhism from the ruin into which it had been brought by the king of Karnasuvaina, and afterwards make himself a great kingdom. The Bodhisattva promised him secret help, but warned him not to occupy the actual throne, and not to use the title *Mahārāja*"².

It is apparent that the throne concerned in this case was the Maukharī and not the Thānesar throne, else there is no reason why the Bodhisattva should have advised him to refrain from occupying a throne which was legitimately his, and from assuming the title *Mahārāja*³. The solution offered by the deity was indeed a happy one. Rājyaśrī was to be the queen, and Harsha the viceregent with the title of *Rāja-*

¹ Bana, *Harsha Charita*, p. 57.

² Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, I, p. 343.

³ Panikkar, *Harsha*, pp. 14-15, nevertheless believes that it was the Thānesar throne that was concerned and that the young prince's reluctance may have been due merely to the recognition of the fact that the inheritance which he was called upon to succeed to was not a particularly comfortable one specially as the feudatories had shown themselves retractor and rebellious.

*patra*¹ or *Kumara*² The Chinese work *Fang Chih* seems to corroborate this theory when it states that Harshavardhana 'administered the kingdom in conjunction with his widowed sister'³ This state of affairs, however, did not last long, for we soon find Harsha assuming the imperial titles⁴. Rājyaśrī, we may therefore conclude, either passed away very soon or she was gradually divested of all authority and receded into the background, Harsha usurping all the power into his own hands. That the business of the oracle was a huge hoax there can be no doubt. But we cannot be certain who was responsible for the idea. If Harsha was sincere and really did not wish to mount the throne of his sister, we must exonerate him of having had recourse to this cunning ruse on his own accord, and hold his ministers responsible for it, for in this case his ministers, seeing that all their pleading with Harsha that he should accept the crown was fruitless, must have devised this plan and placed it before their emperor, pointing out that under such circumstances the people would have no objection to Harsha being their sovereign. If, on the other hand, Harsha was merely feigning reluctance in accepting the throne, but really aimed by his possession of Magadha to make himself the supreme ruler of India, then we can easily perceive how he could have thought of such a stratagem to dupe the people of Magadha. This would also explain, if Rājyaśrī was still alive, how Harsha who had at one time thought it improper to occupy his sister's throne, very soon unscrupulously deprived her of all authority and relegated her to a back seat. However, after Harsha had assumed the imperial title, he seems to have given up his ancestral capital, Thānesar, and established his

¹ Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, I, p. 343

² Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, II, p. 213. The object of refraining from the use of the title *Maharaja* was simply to conciliate in some manner the adherents of the Maukhari princes.

³ Cf. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, I, p. 345.

⁴ e.g., in the Nalanda Seal of Harsha (A. S. I. R., Eastern Circle, 1917-18, p. 44).

headquarters at Kanauj, as this place was more centrally located¹. Thānesar and Kanauj, the ancient kingdoms of Kuru and Pāṇchāla respectively were once more amalgamated under a single sovereign as they had been in the days of Janamejaya, and this powerful union it was that enabled Harsha to become the paramount sovereign of Northern India. Therefore, as Aravamuthan has so well put it, "Harsha came into an empire by dexterously stepping into the shoes of the Maukharis"².

Though Harsha had realised the great dream of his ambition, and had become the emperor of India, he does not seem to have entirely slighted the claims of the Maukharis, for the Maukhari home-lands were still left by him under their control, and a prince named Pūrṇavarman reigned there for over a decade soon after Harsha's accession³, after which Magadha was bestowed upon Mādhava Gupta, a descendant of the Guptas of Mālwa. This version can visibly claim confirmation from the fact that the Deo-Baranark inscription traces the genealogy of Jivita Gupta II, King of Magadha⁴ from Mādhava Gupta, and does not name his predecessors who were rulers of Mālwa as late as the time of Prabhākara-vardhana. It was only when Deva Gupta of Mālwa had been vanquished that Mālwa was lost by the Guptas. For the great crime of Deva Gupta Harsha seized the kingdom of Mālwa and did not bestow it upon Mādhava to whom it properly belonged⁵. Nevertheless, because Mādhava Gupta

¹ The wealthy and luxurious Kanauj described by Hiuen Tsiang was almost entirely the creation of Harsha, who as Lord Paramount of Northern India was able to lavish vast sums upon the adornment of his capital.

² Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 102

³ Cf. the next chapter.

⁴ The Aṭṭisad inscription of Adityasena and the other inscriptions of these rulers indicate that Adityasena's territory lay in Magadha

⁵ This appears very clearly from the *Harsha Charita* where we read that the booty captured from the Malwa army including the throne was taken possession of by Harsha and handed over to his officers (*op. cit.*, p. 225).

had remained a subordinate and loyal ally to him. Harsha provided for him by placing him in charge of Magadha after the death of Pūrṇavarman¹.

Meanwhile, however, Mādhava Gupta had to accompany his liege-lord on his *digvijaya*. When Harsha went out in search of his sister Rājyaśrī, the king of Kāmarupa, Bhāskaravarman, sought his alliance. He was undoubtedly moved to take this step by the constant dread in which he stood of Śaśānka, his powerful and wicked neighbour. The *Harsha Charita* tells us that he sent an ambassador to Harsha with valuable presents to solicit his patronage². This alliance, however, was disastrous to the Gaudas, for we know from the Nidhanpur plates of Bhāskaravarman that Karnasuvarna passed from the hands of the Gaudas to the Varmans of Kāmarupa³. Bhāskaravarman, however, does not seem to have come in possession of this province during the life-time of Harsha⁴. Hiuen Tsiang in the description of his visit to Karnasuvarna makes no mention of any reigning king there, probably because after the death of Śaśānka it passed into the hands of Harsha⁵. It was only on the dismemberment of

¹ It is also possible that Madhava Gupta never came in possession of Magadha till after the death of Harsha. He was of about the same age as Harsha, and might have survived him a few years, after which he was succeeded by Adityasena, whom we know to have been ruling in 672 A. D. (Fleet, *G. I.*, plate No. 42).

² Bana, *Harsha Charita*, p. 218.

³ *I. A.*, XLIII, p. 95.

⁴ Nagendra Nath Vasu, *The Social History of Kamarupa*, I, p. 148, holds the contrary opinion, believing that Karnasuvarna was bestowed upon Bhaskaravarman by Harsha after the latter had defeated Sasanka and compelled him to seek refuge in the hilly tracts of Mayurbhanj.

⁵ Harsha had sworn to annihilate Sasanka, to see "the smoke clouds from the vilest of Gauda's pyre" (Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, II, p. 210). He had sworn to uproot the Gaudas, and though he deputed Bhandi against them he could not carry out his threat for thirteen years, for the Ganjam plates of 619 A. D., record a grant of Madhavaraja II, of the Silodbhava family, and a feudatory of Sasankaraja (*E. I.*, VI, p. 143). Even in 643, when his authority in Upper

the great empire of Harsha shortly after his demise that it was possible for Bhāskaravarman to get any hold over Karnasuvarna¹. Even then the Gaudas did not tamely acquiesce in the loss of their independence. They gave the kings of Kanauj and Kāmarupa any amount of trouble, and their enmity towards these two countries was even handed down to the Pāla and the Sena successors of Śaśānka².

What happened to Mālhwā after the death of Deva Gupta we can hardly say with much certainty. For some time at least, as we have seen, it was retained by Harsha under his direct control, but later on the province seems to have been bestowed upon Bhandi, the cousin of Harsha³; for the Gwalior inscription of Bhoja I and the Sāgar Tal inscription of Vatsaraja state that the Gurjara King Vatsaraja "in battle by force took away the universal sovereignty from the famous family of Bhandi"⁴. The only Bhandi known to history is the companion of Harsha, but Bāna gives us no indication of the family to which Bhandi belonged. By "universal sovereignty" is probably meant that Bhandi on the disruption of Harsha's empire laid claim to the imperial title, and perhaps even succeeded in extending his dominions. It is probable that Western Mālhwā also came now under his suzerainty, hardly anything is known of the history of this portion of Mālhwā at this time. Nevertheless the claim of Bhandi's family to the imperial status was at best a nominal one for after the death of Harshavardhana the sovereignty of Northern India passed into the hands of the Guptas of Magadha of which line Mādhava Gupta, the companion of Harsha, was the first member.

India had been established for fully thirty years, Harsha found it necessary to lead an expedition to Ganjam against the sturdy inhabitants of that remote coast (Cf. Sen and Raychaudhury, *The Groundwork of Indian History*, p. 74).

¹ Cf. below. That Bhaskaravarman continued to rule even after the death of Harsha shows that they were probably of an age.

² Cf. Raychaudhury, *History of Ancient India*, p. 375.

³ From the *Harsha Charita* we know that Bhandi was the son of Yasovati's brother, Yasovati being the mother of Harsha.

⁴ Cf. *J. R. A. S.*, 1909, pp. 137 and 250.

For two reasons it has been assumed that Harshavardhana carried his arms victoriously even into Nepal. The Nepalese *Varṣāvalī*¹ preserves a reminiscence of the conquest of Nepal by an Indian king just before the accession to the throne of Aṁśuvarman; and because the Harsha era was adopted by the Nepalese this conquest has been attributed to Harshavardhana, the *Śaka-karṇi* or 'establisher of the era'. Secondly, a passage in the *Harsha Charita*, though it has a double meaning seems also to refer to an exploit of Harsha. The passage states. "In him a 'supreme Lord' has taken tribute from an inaccessible land of snowy mountains"². Harsha is here represented as exacting tribute from the Nepālī king³.

The fact that Aṁśuvarman of Nepal visited Harsha's kingdom probably on the occasion of the Charity Assembly at Prayāga is another confirmation of the subjugation of Nepāl by the emperor⁴. One great set-back, however, which Harsha suffered was at the hands of Pulikeśi II, the great Chalukya monarch⁵. Hiuen Tsiang calls him *Purakeśa*⁶. The defeat inflicted on Harsha was so great that he would never again venture on a campaign to the south⁷.

Harsha died without leaving any claimant to the empire. He had no son to succeed to his throne. We can hardly say whether Rājyaśrī was then alive, or whether she had any male issue. Harsha's empire, however, fell to pieces, and the various viceroys all declared their independence. Smith believes that a minister named Arjuna usurped the throne for himself, but that he was dispossessed by the combined forces of Tibet and Nepāl, which had been summoned by the

¹ Vide *I. A.*, XIII, p. 413.

² Bana, *Harsha Charita*, p. 76.

³ The other interpretation is that Siva has obtained the hand of Durga, the daughter of Himalaya.

⁴ Cf. Wright, *History of Nepal*, p. 135.

⁵ Cf. Fleet, *Kanarese Dynasties*, p. 350; *E. I.*, VI, p. 10; *I. A.*, V, p. 72; *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, II, p. 5.

⁶ Cf. *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, VIII, p. 250.

⁷ Cf. Moraes, *The Kadamba Kula*, p. 65, note.

Chinese ambassador and that he was deported to China¹. In this conflict it is said that Bhaskaravarman rendered valuable assistance to the Chinese invader, and that he was rewarded with the possession of Karnasuvarna². Vaidya, however, very justifiably gives no credence to the usurpation of the throne by Arjuna and his subsequent defeat by the Chinese envoy, because this story is taken from the Chinese authorities³. But he surmises that an orthodox Hindu claimant of the original Varman family seated himself on the throne of Kanauj⁴. After all, this is only a surmise without any authority to support it.

Arjuna, however, does not appear to have contested the supremacy of Northern India. He was the ruler of the province of Tirabhukti in that period. All that he might have done is to have declared himself independent when the empire ceased to exist in consequence of the death of the emperor and the absence of a successor. This inference seems to be correct for there is no indication of Arjuna having mobilised the resources of the whole empire against the Tibetan army commanded by the Chinese ambassador. On the contrary Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarupa rendered assistance to the Tibetan forces, whilst Magadha seems to have been entirely unaffected by the contest. The war may therefore be more appropriately regarded as a local affair in which the sovereignty of the north was not in the least involved. The supremacy of Northern India, however, seems to have passed into the hands of the Magadha Guptas who had been installed on the throne of Magadha by Harsha after the death of Pūrṇavarman. There does not seem to have been any immediate contest for the supremacy. Ādityasena who inherited the territory from his father Mādhava Gupta, probably assumed independent titles and even declared himself the paramount sovereign some time after the Tibetan

¹ *J. R. A. S.*, 1908, p. 775.

² Cf. Vidyavinoda, *E. I.*, XII, p. 66.

³ Vaidya, *History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, I, p. 334.

⁴ *Ibid.*

war when there was no likelihood of a reviva of the empire

That Harsha had great proclivities towards Buddhism cannot be doubted. In the first place the title Śīlāditya was evidently bestowed upon him by the Buddhist monkish communities. It could not have been his official title; otherwise we should have found it in Bāṇa's biography of the king, in Harsha's own charters and even elsewhere². The name Śīlāditya was favoured much by the Buddhists who esteemed *śīla* (virtue) more than *vikrama* (valour), and who therefore bestowed the name upon many kings of Buddhist fame. No doubt it was the unforeseen afflictions that Harsha had to bear when quite a youth that were responsible for his Buddhistic inclinations. His last dealings with Nālandā too seem to have been connected with that early double tragedy that befell his family³. For it was very probably on this occasion that Śaśāṅka destroyed the sacred places of Buddhism including the *vihāra* at Nālandā, and Harsha, having driven him back to his kingdom, must have restored the ruined university to its pristine glory⁴. Not more than a passing mention may be made here of the great religious assembly held by Harsha in order to give Hiuen Tsiang, the Chinese pilgrim, an opportunity of spreading far and wide the teaching of the Excellent Law. It is one of the most celebrated events of his reign. The result of this assembly was that Buddhism once more became the state religion. But Harsha was not only an adherent of Buddhism, he also followed the tenets of Hinduism⁵. The Banskhara inscription declares that he was a *Parama Mahēśvara*⁶. Bāṇa also relates that when Harsha

¹ Cf. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, *J. I. H.*, V, p. 323.

² Cf. Hoernle, *J. R. A. S.*, 1909, p. 447. Moraes, *The Kadamba Kula*, p. 65, note, points out that in the southern inscriptions Harsha is always called Sri-Harsha and never Sri-Siladitya.

³ Cf. Heras, *J. B. O. R. S.*, XIV, p. 14.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Cf. Gense, *Rulers in Indian History*, p. 67.

⁶ *E. I.*, IV, pp. 208-11.

started on his *digvijaya* from Thanesar, he first worshipped the god Maheśvara¹. In this respect Harsha followed the doctrine which he had received in the paternal home²; for it was written of his father that he offered daily to the Sun "a bunch of red lotuses set in a pure vessel of ruby and tinged, like his own heart, with the sun's hue". Rājyaśrī, too, like her brother evinced Buddhistic propensities, and this unity of religious sentiment was an important link in the fond attachment that subsisted between brother and sister throughout Harsha's reign.

Harsha's death, however, was a signal not only for a political but also a religious revolution. After the Hindu renaissance in the time of the Guptas, Buddhism had lost its hold considerably over the people of India, though several monarchs had off and on tried to revive it. Under the patronage of the Kanauj Emperor, however, it had once more flourished and spread throughout the empire. But the passing away of its powerful patron again brought Buddhism to the confines of bankruptcy, to the verge of the last flicker. It had emitted its ultimate glow, all the dazzle which precedes the end. The forces of orthodox Hinduism like lowering storm clouds had been gathering from all the four quarters, and now burst upon the languishing Buddhist creed with all intensity, sweeping everything before them.

¹ *Harsha Charita*, p. 273. The emblem of the reclining Nandi on the Sonpat Seal is an assertion of this fact.

² Cf. Gense, *Rulers in Indian History*, p. 67.

PART V

The Later Maukharis

CHAPTER I

Purnavarman

Hiuen Tsiang relates that before his time a king named Pūrṇavarman ruled in Magadha. This Pūrṇavarman is called by him "the last of the race of Aśoka-rāja"¹ Cunningham was the first to suggest that Pūrṇavarman might have been a Maukhari² He argued that Maukhari would be "only a variant form of Maurya" and that "Maurya would be a legitimate contraction of Maukhariya"³ Though this may be entirely true, nevertheless it is merely a conjecture which by itself cannot adequately establish any connection between the Mauryas and the Maukharis. What is, however, more probable is that Hiuen Tsiang, being informed that Pūrṇavarman was a Maukhari, rightly or wrongly identified the Maukharis with the Mauryas, and called Pūrṇavarman the last ruler of the Maurya family

Pūrṇavarman, however, to all appearances was a Maukhari. As we have seen, when Harsha stepped upon the Maukhari throne it was with great reluctance that he did it, for he saw visibly that he was doing a great injustice to the

¹ Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, II, p. 218. Dr M. Collins, *G. D. R. D.*, p. 26, identifies Pūrṇavarman with Grahavarman. But his identification cannot be supported. If Grahavarman was already dead when the Bodhi-tree was destroyed (cf. below), how could he have restored it?

² *A. S. I. R.*, XV, p. 166.

³ *Ibid.*

Maukharis. He therefore decided to rule in conjunction with his sister. However, it does not appear as if Rājyaśīlī lived long after this, and Harsha, who had now transferred his capital to Kanauj, placed Magadha in charge of the Maukharis, hoping by this means to appease the Maukhari adherents. Pūrṇavarman was this Maukhari prince who was entrusted with the government of Magadha, and he was even a feudatory of the Kanauj Emperor.

If Pūrṇavarman was a Maukhari, he was evidently a very close relative of Grahavarman, in all probability a younger brother¹. It is strange, however, that Hiuen Tsiang does not mention that the families of Pūrṇavarman and Harsha were united by marriage; but Aravamuthan explains this by saying that the link between the two families had snapped and that Hiuen Tsiang did not feel it befitting to refer to a family which had lost its sovereignty to Harsha².

Pūrṇavarman is celebrated in history as a patron of Buddhism and as the reinvigorator of the Bodhi-tree sought to be destroyed by the impious Śaśāṅka, King of Gauda. We have noticed that when Śaśāṅka marched across Magadha to Kanauj he laid his outrageous hands upon everything Buddhist that he came across. He was very likely responsible for the destruction of the famous university at Nālandā which, as we have said, was probably restored by Harsha³. Hiuen Tsiang also tells us that this was not the only occasion on which Śaśāṅka displayed his fanaticism: "in later times, Śaśāṅka, being a believer in heresy, slandered the religion of Buddha and through envy destroyed the convents and cut down the Bodhi-tree (at Buddha Gayā), digging it up to the very springs of the earth; but yet he did not get to the bottom of the roots. Then he burnt it with fire and sprinkled it with the juice of sugar-cane, desiring to destroy them entirely, and not leave a trace of it behind"⁴. When Pūrṇavarman

¹ Grahavarman, we know from Bana, was the eldest.

² Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 111, note.

³ Cf. Heras, *J. B. O. R. S.*, XIV, p. 18.

⁴ Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, II, p. 118.

heard of this destruction he exclaimed: "The sun of wisdom having set, nothing is left but the tree of Buddha, and this they now have destroyed; what source of spiritual life is there now?" "He then", continues Hiuen Tsiang, "cast his body on the ground, overcome with pity, then with the milk of a thousand cows he again bathed the roots of the tree, and in a night it once more revived and grew to the height of some ten feet¹. Fearing lest it should be again cut down, he surrounded it with a wall of stone twenty-four feet high"². Besides the revival of the Bodhi-tree, Pūrṇavarman, with his great devotion for the law of Buddha, must have found ample more opportunities for extending his patronage to the Buddhists. In fact Hiuen Tsiang mentions a "pavilion of six stages" made at Nālandā by Pūrṇavarman to enshrine a copper statue of Buddha eighty feet high³. What happened to this statue we can hardly say, for no trace of it whatever exists.

If the two inscriptions found in Jāvā and recording the name of a king called Pūrṇavarman are to be attributed to Pūrṇavarman of Magadha, we have reasons for believing that the Maukhari King had extensive dealings with that country, nay, that he even visited that country, for the stones on which the inscriptions are carved also bear the footprints of Pūrṇavarman⁴. It is a pity that in both the inscriptions the name of the country over which Pūrṇavarman reigned is obliterated, for this makes it difficult to determine whether the Pūrṇavarman intended was the King of Magadha or another person.

¹ When Hiuen Tsiang visited the place in 637 A. D., the tree had attained a height of forty or fifty feet.

² It is curious that Hiuen Tsiang tells us that Purnavarman constructed a wall round the tree, for the tree and the wall are both represented in a carving on the beautiful railing round the temple. This either shows that the railing was constructed after this time, or that there had been another wall round the tree which had either fallen into decay or had been destroyed.

³ Cf. Heras, *J. B. O. R. S.*, XIV, p. 18.

⁴ Cf. *I. A.*, IV, pp. 357-8. The inscriptions were found in two different places, at Jamboe and at Charoenten.

in Jāvā called after him. One of the inscriptions, the Charoenten inscription, compares Pūrṇavarman's footstems with those of Viṣṇu; but as Prof. Kern remarks, we need not certainly infer from the comparison that the inscription is Brahmanical, for the whole Hindu Pantheon is fully acknowledged by the Buddhists, and very often enlarged and enriched particularly with evil spirits and demons¹. Dr. Burnell derives the name of the Javanese Pūrṇavarman from the Pallava kings². He does not evidently contend that there was a Pallava king called Pūrṇavarman, but probably he means that the name ending in Varman was an imitation of the names of the kings by whose subjects Jāvā was colonised³.

In the *Bhāṣhya* of Śāṅkarācharya on the *Vedānta Sūtra* we find a reference to the coronation of one Pūrṇavarman⁴, whom Telang holds to be identical with Pūrṇavarman of Magadhā⁵. To support this identification Telang satisfactorily proves that the *Bhāṣhya* was written in Northern India in Magadhā at Benāres. In the next instance Telang tries to show that Pūrṇavarman was a contemporary of Śāṅkarācharya, for the latter would preferably refer to a reigning king than to one who had ceased reigning, particularly for the purposes of such an illustration as Śāṅkarācharya wishes to give⁶. Again, the very fact that Śāṅkara refers to Pūrṇavarman who was a Buddhist, while he himself was a Brahman, shows, according to Telang, that there was some connection between them, the connection being that the Buddhist King was the sovereign of Magadhā when the *Bhāṣhya* was written. Though Telang is very probably

¹ *I. A.*, IV, p. 357.

² Burnell, *South Indian Palaeography*, p. 101.

³ Cf. Telang, *I. A.*, XIII, p. 97.

⁴ *Bhāṣhya*, II, 1, 17.

⁵ *I. A.*, XIII, pp. 95 ff.

⁶ In the passage in question, Śāṅkara draws a parallel between two propositions which may be briefly expressed thus (1) before Pūrṇavarman's coronation, a son of a barren woman was a king; (2) before creation non-entity existed.

correct in identifying Pūrṇavarman of the *Bhāṣya* with Pūrṇavarman of Magadha¹, he seems to go wrong in making Śankarācharya a contemporary of Pūrṇavarman, for in another passage of the *Bhāṣya* a contrast is drawn between Pūrṇavarman and Rājavarman who lived in the eighth century².

After the death of Pūrṇavarman we find Mādhava Gupta on the throne of Magadha. Hiuen Tsiang mentions no successor of Pūrṇavarman, and very probably Harsha elevated Mādhava Gupta, his loyal friend, to the throne of Pūrṇavarman. If, however, he was not helped by Harsha in succeeding to the throne of Magadha, he might have obtained possession of it during the confusion that followed the death of the emperor. Undoubtedly Mādhava Gupta acquitted himself very creditably on the throne of Magadha, for in the next generation the sovereignty of Northern India passed into the hands of the Guptas of Magadha as is testified by the Deo-Baranārī inscription in which Adityasena is given the titles of *Paramabhaddāraka* and *Mahārājādhirāja*, and is said to have "ruled the whole earth up to the shores of the oceans." Adityasena even performed horse sacrifices in celebration of his imperial status.

¹ We know of no other king who bore the name of Purnavarman, though there is one Purna-rajā, son of Sogga, mentioned in the Pehewa inscription of Bhoja Deva (Cf. *J. A. S. B.*, 1853, pp. 673-9).

² Cf. *J. R. A. S.*, 1916, p. 154.

Bhogavarman

Bhogavarman is the next Maukhari prince of whom we have any records. He was a contemporary of Ādityasena of Magadha, whose daughter he married¹. In the inscriptions of the Nepāl kings Bhogavarman is definitely called a Maukhari. He must have enjoyed an eminent status to have been selected a son-in-law by Ādityasena, but evidently he was a feudatory of the Magadha King. Aravamuthan doubts whether he could have been a ruler², but there is a sentence in an inscription of the Nepāl rājā Jayadeva II which shows that he did enjoy the position of a king. The inscription says that "by his glory (Bhogavarman) put to shame hostile kings"³. Nevertheless the inscriptions do not connect him with any particular territory⁴, nor do they give him any titles. All that they have to say of him is that he was an "illustrious" person, "the crest-jewel of the illustrious Varmans of the valorous Maukhari race". Another dif-

¹ Fleet, *G. I.*, p. 187, *E. I.*, V, app. p. 74; *I. A.*, IX, p. 181; XIII, p. 420.

² Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 112.

³ *I. A.*, IX, p. 181.

⁴ Vaidya, *H. M. H. I.*, I, p. 330, supposes that he belonged to Bihar, because Bihar adjoined Adityasena's territory on one side and Sivadeva's on the other.

ficiency about Bhogavarman is to ascertain how he was connected with the Maukharis ¹.

Bhogavarman also established an alliance with the Lichchhavis of Nepāl by marrying his daughter Vatsadevi to Śivadeva II, the son of Narendradeva ².

Nothing is known of the Maukharis after Bhogavarman till we come to the glorious days of Yaśovarman of Kanauj. We do not know whether Bhogavarman left any sons to succeed him ³, and hence also how Yaśovarman was possibly related to him. The Maukhari family had fallen upon evil days, and none except a valiant and intrepid member like Yaśovarman could restore the prestige of the family to its pristine glory.

¹ There is another Bhogavarman whose name is recorded in some of the Nepal inscriptions. One inscription of Śivadeva I (dated 635 A. D.) which records a grant made by that king at the request of the *mahasamanta Amsuvarman* tells us that the *dataka* of the inscription was the *Svamin Bhogavarman* (*J. A.*, XIV, pp. 97 ff; Bendall, *Journey of Nepal*, pp. 72 ff. and plate VIII). This Bhogavarman who was at least one generation ahead of his Maukhari namesake would seem to be the nephew of Amsuvarman, who issued a charter from Kailasakutabhavana. The charter inscription which is dated 644 A. D., tells us that Amsuvarman's sister was Bhogadevi, the wife of the Rajaputra Surasena and the mother of Bhogavarman and Bhagyadevi. Cunningham, *A.S.I.R.*, XV, p. 163, by identifying the two Bhogavarmans comes to the erroneous conclusion that the later Sena Rajas of Bengal were the direct descendants of Adityasena, and that Amsuvarman was a contemporary of this Magadha King.

² Mabel Duff, *The Chronology of India*, p. 62, S. Levi, *Le Nepal*, II, pp 167-8.

³ Cunningham, *A. S. I. R.*, III, p. 136, points out to a king of Eastern India in 692 A. D., called by the Chinese Mo-lo-pa-mo or Malavarman. We can hardly say who this king was, or whether he really existed. If he did exist, he must have been a relative of Bhogavarman who flourished at about the same time. Very likely he was Bhogavarman's successor.

CHAPTER III

Yasovarman

Though Yaśovarman of Kanauj is known to us from at least three different sources, not one of these sources informs us to what family he belonged. The *Gaudavāho* of Vāk-patirāja credits him with a successful *digvijaya*, the defeat of a Magadha king and a victory over a Gauda king; the *Rājatarangīni* of Kalhana depicts him as having been defeated by the Kashmir King Lalitāditya; and a stone inscription recovered at Nālandā records that Mālāda, the son of Yaśovarman's minister made certain gifts to a temple erected by king Balāditya in honour of the 'Son of Suddhodana' i. e., Buddha. None of these, however, say a word about Yaśovarman's ancestors or successors, and the lineage of the great Kanauj Emperor still baffles identification.

Quite a number of scholars, however, connect him with the Maukharis, and some of the reasons advanced are quite substantial. As we saw in the last chapter the Maukhari family had certainly not died out. It still continued to hold sway in some part of Magadha, though it had lost its paramount influence in the politics of Northern India. It is quite possible, therefore, that after the death of Jivita Gupta II, the last member of the Magadha Gupta family of whom we have any record, Yaśovarman, a Maukhari prince, assumed the role of emperor¹. His name ending as it does with the patronymic

¹ Cf. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, *J. I. H.*, V, pp. 325-6.

varman which is invariably connected with the Maukharis tends to prove the supposition that he was a scion of that distinguished family. Moreover Vākpatirāja eulogises him as an ornament of the lunar race of kings, and therefore must have considered him to be a Kshatriya; and the Maukharis, we know, were also Somavaṁśi Kshatriyas¹.

It is apparent from the *Gaudavāho* that Yaśovarman immediately after his accession to the throne aimed at the suzerainty of the whole of Northern India like Harsha. He began a *digvijaya* throughout India, after the successful completion of which he attacked the King of Gauda, but we are not told who this Gauda King was, nor are we informed in which city he had his head-quarters, or the manner in which he was killed. It has often been opined that Yaśovarman's *digvijaya* as represented by Vākpatirāja is not authentic², merely because the poem is called *Gaudavāho*, or the killing of the Gauda King, and this is the only event that is considered to be historically true. True, there is no other historical confirmation of this conquering expedition, but the eulogistic terms used by the composer of the *praśasti* of the Nālandā stone inscription of Yaśovarman seem to show that the *digvijaya* was an accomplished and well-known fact. This is what the inscription has to say of the King: "He shines above all in every quarter like the resplendent sun, who has risen after spreading his rays on the top of all the mountains and has torn asunder by the diffusion of the severe rays the foe of terrible darkness, who is the well-known protector of the world"³. Why the killing of the Gauda King is treated in greater details and is made the central fact of the

¹ The Maukharis are supposed to have been descended from the Mauryas. As Smith points out, a late Jaina work, the *Prabhu-vaka-Charita*, describes Yaśovarman as being descended from Chandra Gupta and as a bright ornament to his race. This statement seems to show that this Jaina author also believed Yaśovarman to be of Maurya descent (Cf. *J. R. A. S.*, 1908, p. 786).

² Cf. Vaidya, *H. M. H. I.*, I, p. 342, note.

³ *E. I.*, XX, p. 45.

main episode of the poem, is, perhaps, because this king also lay claims to the imperial title, whereas the others submissively acquiesced in the overlordship of Yaśovarman¹.

It must be remembered that the *Gaudavāho*, as its name indicates, had to deal with the slaying of the Gauda King; but the 1209 ślokas that we possess of the poem do not deal with that subject at any length. Indeed the colophon of the poem clearly states that these 1209 ślokas merely constitute the *Kathāmukha* or introduction to the story proper². Being an introduction we must expect in it some reference to the theme of the poem, and yet nothing more than a reference: the details have to be set forth in the main poem. There is just one śloka, however, that gives us a hint of the subject—śloka 1194—that refers directly to the Gauda King by stating that Yaśovarman's sword prospers by cutting the head of the Gauda ruler³. The rest of the poem describes Yaśovarman's *digvijaya* and details an account of the author and the circumstances under which the poem came to be composed. Evidently, therefore, it narrates the previous history of the hero—all the conquests that led up to his establishment of an empire and his assumption of the royal titles.

Yaśovarman started on his campaign after the close of the south-west monsoon in the month of October and marching in a south-easterly direction he came to the banks of the Son. He then proceeded to the Vindhya and *en route* paid a visit to Vindhya-vāsini, the blood-thirsty goddess to whom even at that time human sacrifices were offered. The Magadha King, however, fearing his approach fled; but Yaśovarman kept the field and entered the Magadha King's territory where he encamped for the rainy season. When the rains were over the nobles of the Magadha King succeeded in bringing up their cowardly sovereign to face Yaśovarman,

¹ Vaidya, again, unhesitatingly surmises that the poet conceived the *digvijaya* as a probable event and not as an actual fact.

² Cf. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, *J. I. H.*, V, p. 328. We can hardly say whether the rest of the work was completed or not.

³ Tuha dharma sandhaniya-gayinda-mukha-halo asi jayayi Gauda gala chedda valagga santhye avahi ovva.

but the battle ended disastrously for them and the king was slain.

It has wrongly been supposed that this Magadha King vanquished by Yaśovarman was the same ruler as the King of Gauda. But as Dr. Krishnaswāmi Aiyangār points out, there is no warrant for equating the Magadha King as equivalent to the Gauda¹. In fact *śloka* 844, which refers to Magadha, Vanga and Gauda separately, clearly avers that the *Magadhanāyaka* was uprooted and dispossessed of his kingdom formerly (*pura*)². The victorious invader then proceeded eastwards to the Vanga country, whose King too submitted before Yaśovarman's conquering sword. The King next advanced southwards along the coast and then conquered the Pārasikas in a hard-fought battle³. Yaśovarman then turned his steps to the river Narmadā, and after a short stay there moved northwards across *Marudeśa* or Rājputānā arriving at Thānesar. He is next alleged to have proceeded to Ayodhyā, the site of the vanished city of Harischandra, and then to the Mandāra and Himālaya mountains, after which he returned to his capital to enjoy his conquest⁴.

It is, however, not unreasonable to suppose that Yaśovarman was not left in peaceful enjoyment of his sovereignty, for his great military excursion excited the fears and jealousy of Lalitāditya of Kāshmir, another aspirant to the

¹ Krishnaswami Aiyangar, *J. I. H.*, V, p 329.

² This *Magadha-nayaka* in all probability was Jivita Gupta II or his successor. Jivita Gupta II, the great grandson of Adityasena in the male line must have been a contemporary of Jayadeva II of Nepal, the great grandson of Adityasena in the female line. We have 759-60 A. D. as a date for Jayadeva (*J. I. H.*, V, p. 325) which is nearly synchronous with that of Yasovarman.

³ From the course followed by Yasovarman, after defeating the Parasikas it seems very likely that the Parasikas were the Pasis who had settled in Gujerat.

⁴ Some historians give no credence to these exploits of Yasovarman because Vakpatiraja does not give the names of the defeated kings. Nevertheless they accept the killing of the Gauda King only as an historical fact.

in eria dignity who therefore felt himself compelled to challenge Yaśovarman's claim to paramount power. The *Gaudavāho*, of course, could not speak of the Yaśovarman-Lalitāditya contest, as it must have been composed immediately after the completion of Yaśovarman's *digvijaya* and his defeat of the Gauda King, whilst the challenge from the Kāshmir King came many years later. It was, however, a severe and prolonged contest which ended in a decisive defeat of the Kanauj King, who fled the battlefield or as the poet-historian puts it, "showed his back to the fiercely shining Lalitāditya"¹. It is not sufficiently clear whether the defeated king was allowed to retain his kingdom, one verse of the poem makes out that he was entirely uprooted, whilst another says that Yaśovarman, who had such celebrated court-poets as Bhāvabhūti and Vākpati, himself "became by his defeat a panegyrist of his (Lalitāditya's) virtues"². This is the verdict of Kalhana's story which, as recognised by everyone, is a strange blend of fact and fancy, and in the absence of a Kanauj version, we can hardly say anything more on this point. However, as the *Rājataranginī* says, Lalitāditya was at first satisfied with the mere submission of Yaśovarman to him, it was his minister of war, Mitraśarma, who induced him to make war on the Kanauj King, because in the treaty that had been drafted Yaśovarman had the impudence of placing his name before that of the Kāshmir King. Lalitāditya seems to have retained his suzerainty over Kanauj, at least nominally, for some time³, for the *Rājataranginī*⁴ tells us that he made a grant of the city and the adjoining lands

¹ *Rājataranginī*, Chap. IV, verses 135-144 (Stein, I, p. 134).

² *Rājataranginī*, (Stein, I, p. 134). Dutt's translation (I, p. 68) does not say that Yasovarman became a panegyrist of Lalitāditya but merely that Yasovarman's court-poets went over to Kashmir, whilst Yasovarman and his family were extirpated.

³ When Fr^s Heras and myself were at Kanauj, we were able to obtain there a coin of Lalitāditya from one of the local goldsmiths. The coin is now in the cabinet of the Museum of the Indian Historical Research Institute.

⁴ *Rājataranginī*, Chap. IV, verse 187

and villages to the temple of the Sun (Aditya) which he built at Lalitapura, though it is not likely that his beneficiaries ever draw revenue from an estate so far distant².

Kalhana in his *Rājataranginī* tells us a curious story about the treacherous murder of a Gauda King by Lalitāditya at Trigrama, which cannot be fully understood. The Gauda King had been assured of safety by Lalitāditya by his commitment to the care of the god Parihāsakeśava but was murdered at the king's command. Some of the Gauda people thereupon entered Kāshmir on pretence of visiting the shrine of Sarasvatī, but they suddenly surrounded the temple of Rāmasvāmī, mistaking that deity for Parihāsakeśava. The image was overturned and smashed to bits. The Kāshmir soldiers, however, attacked the Gaudas and felled them to pieces. It appears very likely that this Gauda King murdered by Lalitāditya was the son and heir of the Gauda King vanquished and slain by Yaśovarman. He had come to Kāshmir in all probability to solicit assistance from Lalitāditya in recovering his father's throne which had been usurped by Yaśovarman. Lalitāditya who aspired to the imperial dignity and probably contemplated the subjugation of Gauda saw here an opportunity of making this exploit less difficult by getting rid of the legitimate claimant. If we can trust Kalhana, Lalitāditya actually carried his victorious arms to the Eastern sea³.

Besides the defeat at the hands of Lalitāditya, Yaśovarman is believed to have also been defeated previously in the south⁴, but the supposition is not well-founded. The only basis for such a supposition is that the Chalukya King Vinayāditya, the grandson of Pulikeśi II, is mentioned in many inscriptions to have defeated a northern king. In the first

¹ Lalitapura is the modern Latapor on the right bank of the Vitas-ta or Beas in Kashmir.

² As Smith observes, the grant seems to have been made rather as a vaunt than as a substantial benefaction (*J. R. A. S.*, 1908, p. 782).

³ *Rajataranginī*, Chap. IV, verses 146-150 (Dutt, pp. 68-70)

⁴ Cf. Vaidya, *H. M. H. I*, I, pp. 336-338

place we know from inscriptions that Vinayaditya ruled from 680 A. D. to 696 A. D., dates which do not synchronise with the reign of Yaśovarman which falls in the second quarter of the eighth century¹. In the next instance, Vaidya has not observed one inscription of Vinayāditya which records a victory over a northern people, and consequently he maintains that Vinayāditya's defeat of a northern king has remained an unsolved riddle². The inscription which is dated 694 A. D. says: "By him the Pallavas, Kalabhras, Keralas, Haihayas, Mālavas, Cholas, Pāṇdyas, and others were brought into service equally with the Ālupas, Gaṅgas and others of old standing"³. Who are the Mālavas mentioned here, if not a northern people? We can scarcely believe therefore that Yaśovarman fell a prey to a Chalukya king.

An important event of Yaśovarman's reign was the embassy sent by the Kanauj King to the Chinese emperor seeking the favour of the great eastern potentate. The date of this mission in the annals of the Chinese is 731 A. D., and its leader was one Seng-po-ta⁴. The significance of this diplomatic gesture on the part of the Kanauj Emperor can be correctly gauged if we remember that the energy of the Chinese government was at this period actively arrested in establishing its influence on the northern and north-western frontiers of India with the object of curbing the victorious onrush of the Islamic armies and bridling the insolence of the Tibetans who oftentimes operated in conjunction with the Arabs⁵. Similar missions had already been entertained by

¹ Cf. Chapter on "*The Coinage and the Chronology of the Maukharis*".

² Vaidya, *H. M. H. I*, I, p. 336

³ *E. C.*, XI, Dg, 66, Fleet, *Sanskrit and old Kanarese inscriptions*, I. A., VII, p. 303

⁴ The king who despatched the embassy is called I-sha-tu-nio by the Chinese. (Cf. Cunningham, *A. S. I. R.*, III, p. 135)

⁵ Cf. Smith, *J. R. A. S.*, 1908, p. 775 On page 310 of Pauthier's *Chine Ancienne*, which is a history of China written from the Chinese documents collected by Fr. Amiot, the King of Central India is said to have sent an embassy to the Chinese court in the period of the years *Kai-yuan* (from 713 to 742) The

the Chinese from the Kashmir Kings Chandrapīda and Lantaditya, whilst royal titles were conferred by the emperor at about the same time on the chieftains of Udayana, Chitral, Khottal, Yasin, Ghazni and Kapisa¹.

Yaśovarman has been connected with a town called Yaśovarmapura which he is credited with having founded. A Buddhist inscription recovered at Ghosrāwa² and belonging to the reign of Devapāla, the third Pāla King, speaks of one Viradeva as having visited Yaśovarmapura where he stayed for some time and received the respectful attentions of the King³. It would appear from this that Yaśovarmapura was the political capital of Magadha. Nevertheless, we know from the *Rājataranginī* that Yaśovarman was the King of Kanauj; and therefore we might regard Yaśovarmapura as a second capital. Yaśovarman most probably founded that city in Magadha to commemorate his eastern victories. As regards the identification of the city it has been supposed to be either the present town of Bihār or the very Ghosrāwa where the inscription was found. Cunningham believed that it was Bihār, for he took the word *vihāra*, which occurs in the inscription, as a proper name, and translated that Viradeva went "to Bihār, the town of the glorious Yaśovarman"⁴. Kielhorn on the other hand takes the word *vihara* in its ordinary sense and Yaśovarmapura as the name of the *vihara*. His translation is: "the glorious *vihara* (called) Yaśovarmapura"⁵. It is hardly possible to say which of these conjectures may be true; but there is one point in favour of Cunningham's translation: the word *śrīmat* is prefixed in the text to the name Yaśovarmapuram.

ambassador came to solicit help from the Chinese against the Arabs and the Tibetans. The ambassador is related to have brought some parrots as a present to the emperor. These parrots are described in the documents as birds of five colours that could talk.

¹ Cf. Smith, *J. R. A. S.*, 1908, p. 776

² *I. A.*, XVII, pp. 307 ff

³ Cunningham, *A. S. I. R.*, III, p. 120.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 120, 135; VIII, p. 76.

⁵ *I. A.*, XVII, p. 311.

it is necessary to point out in this chapter that the recently discovered Nālandā stone inscription of Yaśovarmanadeva has been wrongly attributed by Dr. Śāstri to Yaśodharman, the conqueror of the Hunic King Mihirakula. It is strange to find that though Dr. Śāstri was conscious that the inscription was a late one, yet he attributed it to Yaśodharman who flourished in the first half of the sixth century¹. He finds that the characters of the new epigraph "present a very marked development" in contrast with the inscriptions of the period of 530 A. D. and even somewhat later inscriptions. He admits that "they largely resemble the characters of the Aphrad stone inscription of Ādityasena" whose rule extended far into the third quarter of the seventh century. He also says that "the alphabet used in this (Nālandā) inscription is to a large extent identical with the modern Devanāgarī or Nāgarī". Nevertheless, he forgets the claims of Yaśovarman of Kanauj to this inscription and attributes it to Yaśodharman of Mālhwā, not hesitating to propose even a correction in his name. It is, however, just one erroneous assumption that has led Dr. Śāstri astray. He believes that the inscription mentions Yaśovarman as the suzerain of Balāditya². But this is not the case. The second verse of the inscription eulogises Yaśovarman as the protector of the world, as a resplendent and newly-risen Sun and as a conqueror of all the kings³. The third verse mentions the favour bestowed by Yaśovarman on Mālāda, the son of his minister Tikina, and the governor of the King's frontier provinces. The next three verses speak of a temple of Buddha that had been erected at Nālandā by King Balāditya, these verses also lavish praises on the Nālandā university. After this is related that Mālāda offered some gifts to the image of Buddha and also to the monks and the rest of the Buddhist fraternity.

There is nothing in the inscription to show that Yaśovarman was in any way connected with Balāditya. We are

¹ *E. I.*, XX, p. 38.

² *E. I.*, XX, p. 40.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

simply told that Mālāda, the son of Yaśovarman's minister Tikina, who was the custodian of the northern routes of Yaśovarman's empire came to Nālandā to bestow gifts and donations to a famous temple of Buddha which King Balāditya had erected nearly two centuries before. We know from Hiuen Tsiang that Balāditya had erected a monastery at Nālandā¹. One Chinese traveller also speaks of a majestic temple constructed by the same sovereign "To the north of this was a large temple, above 300 feet high, built by King Balāditya. In its size and ornamentation, and in its image of Buddha, this temple resembled the one at the Bodhi tree"². In all likelihood the image of Buddha described in verse 14 of the Nālandā inscription is identical with the one set up by Balāditya.

The Nālandā inscription is important because it is the first epigraphical record to be discovered of King Yaśovarman. Hitherto all our knowledge of this great Kanauj Emperor was obtainable only from literary sources. Again the inscription tends to show that Yaśovarman's authority extended far into the north. The special precaution in guarding the frontier passes is in complete agreement with the known facts of the history of that period. Lalitāditya, the contemporary King of Kāshmir, after he had fought the Tibetans had the five great roads closed³, in all probability in conjunction with Yāsovarman who would appear to have been his suzerain, till Lalitāditya anxious to shake off his yoke of subservience rose in rebellion against him, defeated him and uprooted his lineage.

That Yaśovarman was a great patron of literature is an incontrovertible fact of mediaeval Indian history. Kalhana records that he was served by Vākpatirāja, the illustrious Bhavabhūti, and other poets⁴, a statement which is amply confirmed by Vākpatirāja himself and the literary traditions of the Jains.

¹ Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, II, p. 164

² *Ibid.*, p. 170

³ *J. R. A. S.*, 1908, pp. 776-777.

⁴ Stein *Rajatarangini* Chap IV verse 144.

With the death of Yaśovarman the Maukhari family became extinct. When the *Rājataranginī* says that "Yaśovarman and his family were extirpated" by Lalitāditya¹, we cannot suppose that any member of the house could have inherited the crown. The Jaina books relate wonderful stories about Ama, King of Kanauj and Gwalior, who is described as the son of Yaśovarman². But evidently these stories belong to the realm of pure fiction. The immediate successor of Yaśovarman seems to have been one Vajrāyudha, King of Kanauj and Pāñchāla, who is only known from a passing reference made by Rājasekhara, the dramatist who lived at the Pratihāra court of Kanauj in the eleventh century³. The termination *Yudha* of his name is another indication that he did not belong to the Maukhari lineage. After Vajrāyudha came a king called Indrāyudha who is said in the Bhāgalpur copperplate to have been conquered by King Dharmapāla, who restored the throne to Chakrāyudha⁴. The Khalimpur grant of Dharmapāla also relates that the king of Pāñchāla was restored with the consent of the neighbouring states⁵. One of these three successors of Yaśovarman undoubtedly was the King of Kanauj mentioned in the *Rājataranginī* as having been vanquished by Jayāpīda, a grandson of Lalitāditya⁶. Most likely it was Vajrayudha, who seems to have been Jayāpīda's senior contemporary⁷. After Chakrāyudha, however, the empire of Kanauj passed into the hands of a Pratihāra King of Bhīnmal named Nāgabhatta II

¹ Dutt, *Rajatarangini*, I, p. 68.

² Chakravarti, *J. A. S. B.*, IV, New Series, p. 281.

³ It is impossible to place Vajrayudha anywhere except between Yaśovarman and Indrayudha.

⁴ Rajasekhara, *Karpura-manjari*, p. 266, says: "to the capital of Vajrayudha, the King of Panchala, to Kanauj"

⁵ *J. A.*, XV, p. 304.

⁶ *E. I.*, IV, p. 245.

⁷ Dutt, *Rajatarangini*, I, p. 88.

⁸ Cf. Hoernle, *J. R. A. S.*, 1905, p. 17.

PART VI

Internal History

CHAPTER I

The Capital of the Maukharis

Perhaps the most debatable question in Maukhari history is that of their capital. There is scarcely any direct evidence on the question, and any conclusion that might be arrived at can at best be only theoretical.

We have already noted that the Maukharis must have been a very ancient clan, as is evidenced by the clay seal discovered at Gayā. But we know nothing of their history prior to the third century A. D., when we come across some of the earliest members of the Maukhari family. Before the advent of the imperial Guptas, we have the names of three Maukhari rulers; Kshatravarman, Sundaravarman, and Kalyāṇavarman. The first is known to us from a mere passing allusion made to him by Bāṇa in his *Harsha Charita*.¹ We hear of Sundaravarman and Kalyāṇavarman in the newly-discovered play, the *Kaumudīmahotsava*. There can be no doubt that these rulers had their capital at Pāṭaliputra, for the drama is unmistakeably explicit on the point. Moreover, as we have seen, Sundaravarman was the immediate predecessor of the imperial Guptas, who usurped the throne of Pāṭaliputra, when Chandra Gupta I, the adopted son of Sundaravarman, rebelled against his foster-father, and compelled his little son Kalyāṇavarman to flee the country and to seek refuge in a forest. If Kshatravarman belonged

¹ Bana, *Harsha Charita*, p. 194.

to the same family as Sundaravarman, as he most probably did, then he too must have had his seat of government at Pātaliputra.

We hear nothing more of the Maukharis for nearly three quarters of a century till we come across another dynasty of rulers—the line of Yajñavarman—whose records have been found in the Barābar and Nāgārjunī Hills in the district of Gayā. Champā, Rājagriha and Gayā are some of the cities variously accredited as having been the capital of this line of rulers. Pātaliputra, however, seems to be out of the running for the position of the capital city of this dynasty, as it was still in possession of the imperial Guptas. That Champā, very probably, was the capital of Yajñavarman's line of rulers is the opinion of Dr Mark Collins, who would have us believe that their region was in the neighbourhood of and identical with that of the Aṅgas¹. The capital of the Aṅgas was at Champā near Bhāgalpur on the right bank of the Ganges where the present villages of Champānagar and Champāpur stand. This would therefore, according to the identity, be the capital of Yajñavarman's dynasty. To establish this identity between the Aṅga and the Maukhari kingdoms, Dr Collins has recourse to Dandin's *Daśakumāra-charita*, in which one of the characters reminds the Aṅga King of a special boon granted by the Mauryas to the merchants of Aṅga exempting them from capital punishment. The *Daśakumāracharita*, however, mentions only the Aṅgas and the Mauryas, and not the Maukharis. But in the *Harsha Charita* and in the inscriptions of the Guptas there is no mention made of the Aṅgas. Moreover, a reference in the Aphsad inscription of Ādityasena to the "ponderous and mighty rutting elephants" of the Maukharis has a counterpart in Kālidāsa's admiration of the well-trained elephants of the Aṅga kings². Dr. Collins observes that the language used by Dandin indicates that he is referring to a ruling of the king's ancestors rather than to a regulation introduced by a preced-

¹ Collins, *G. D. R. D.*, pp. 23-27

² *Raghuvamsa*, VI, 27.

ing dynasty. He is also of opinion that very possibly there was a later Maurya dynasty than that of Aśoka, "that when Puśyāmītra slew the last direct representative of this line and seized the government of Pāṭaliputra, the Mauryas still maintained hold on Champā and continued to exercise their power within the narrow limits of the Aṅga territory" In this way Dr. Collins tries to identify the Mauryas of Champā, the King of Aṅga and the Maukharī chieftains whose records are available in the Barābar and Nāgārjunī Hills. But as Aravamuthan observes, "while the conjectures and the linking them together are ingenious, each of the conjectures individually is so frail a link that the chain formed of a number of them cannot claim to be in anywise strong"¹.

Aravamuthan himself is of opinion that Rājagriha must have been their capital, and he gives two reasons for his conjecture. In the first place he points out that the provenance of their inscriptions is nearer Rājagriha than Champā. In the second instance he observes that Rājagriha often shared with Pāṭaliputra the honour of being the capital of Magadha². There is one circumstance, however, that disproves the theory of Aravamuthan. The dynasty of Yaśnavarman was a line of mere chieftains, and it cannot be supposed that they were masters of the whole of Magadha. On the contrary the Guptas were at this time the dominant power in Magadha, whilst the Maukharis only occupied a second or a third rate position, and a humble power like this could not have ruled from so illustrious a capital as Rājagriha. They had to be content with a humbler metropolis. It is not unlikely, therefore, that Gayā was their seat of government, as this is the closest city to the Barābar and Nāgārjunī Hills where they have left records of their rule³.

¹ Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 83.

² *Ibid.*

³ As Aravamuthan admits, none of Yaśnavarman's line seems to have ruled beyond the country surrounding Gaya (*op. cit.*, p. 101).

The dynasty of Yajñavarman was succeeded by that of Harivarman. Though we possess more records of this line of kings, all of them are silent on the two most important questions, the extent of the Maukharī kingdom and the locality of their seat of government. These kings of Harivarman's dynasty were evidently much more powerful than those of the preceding dynasty. In fact, we know that some of them, Īśānavarman, Śarvavarman and Avantivarman, even laid claims to the sovereignty of Upper India. As we have seen, the Guptas had by this time considerably diminished in power. They had even shifted their capital westwards to Kāśī¹, giving place to the Maukharis who were slowly building up an empire. In all probability, therefore, the headquarters of Harivarman's line of Maukharis was established in the famous city of Pāṭaliputra. True, the territory of the Maukharis was expanding eastwards, but the district round Gayā seems to have ever remained their homeland². Two reasons, however, have been adduced in favour of the contention that Kanauj was the capital of the Maukharis, but both of them can be easily nullified. It has been pointed out that most of the coins of Harivarman's dynasty were found near Kanauj in the Fyzābād district. Though this is a powerful argument, the fact that their inscriptions were recovered far away from Kanauj and to the east of Lucknow is the more cogent reason why we might without much ado set aside these claims of Kanauj. Another proof cited in favour of this city as the Maukhari capital is the passage in the *Harsha Charita* which informs us that Rājyaśrī, the sister of Harshavardhana who was married to Grahavarman, was imprisoned in Kanauj by the Mālhwā King³. One historian in his enthusiasm for this theory has tried to read something more than what Bana himself tells us. Grahavarman accord-

¹ Cf. Raychaudhury, *History of Ancient India*, p. 363.

² It is the opinion of Mr. Jayaswal that the seat of the Maukharis has always been the district of Gaya (Cf. Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 80, note).

³ Bana, *Harsha Charita*, p. 173.

ing to him, was also killed in Kanauj¹. As a matter of fact, the *Harsha Charita* does not tell us at all where Grahavarman was murdered and where Rājyaśrī was captured. It only says that she was imprisoned in Kanauj, which does not prove that it was her husband's capital, but rather that it formed a part of the Mālhwā King's dominion. In fact Shankar Pāndurang Pandit has definitely adopted the view that "up to the time that Rājyaśrī's husband was murdered, Kanauj was the capital of the Mālhwā kings", and Smith thinks that he may be right². What really must have happened is this. Deva Gupta, the Mālhwā King, learning of the death of the Thānesar King, Prabhākaravardhana, the great ally of Grahavarman, must have marched to the Maukharī capital, Pātaliputra, and murdered the youthful ruler. He must have then captured Rājyaśrī and carried her off to Kanauj, there to imprison her. Moreover, the fact that Hiuen Tsiang mentions Pūrṇavarman as ruling in Magadha, most probably at Pātaliputra, shows that the previous kings of this lineage also ruled from there. Though Harsha had usurped the territories of the Maukharis, it is very likely that he did not establish himself in their capital, for this would be a bold and dangerous undertaking. The Maukharī homelands were, therefore, allowed by him to be retained by Pūrṇavarman.

Harsha, however, whose ancestral seat was at Thānesar, moved his head-quarters to Kanauj, as this city was more centrally placed than Thānesar. Hence the great importance and the paramount status of the premier city of Northern India which this city soon attained, to the great detriment of Pātaliputra. Even when Hiuen Tsiang visited Kanauj for the second time in 643 A. D., it was already a great city, whilst Pātaliputra was in ruins and almost deserted³. A great change had been wrought since the visit of Fa-hien at the beginning of the fifth century, when Kanauj, as regarded from the Buddhist point of view, was a place of not great

¹ Vaidya, *History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, I, p. 33

² *J. R. A. S.*, 1908, p. 772.

³ Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, II, p. 82.

importance, possessing but two monasteries of the Hinayana school, and just one noteworthy stupa¹. The statistics of Gupta coins found at Kanauj also testify to the non-importance of the town at that time². But in Hiuen Tsiang's time "the capital, which had the Ganges on the west side, was above 21 li in length and 4 or 5 li in breadth; it was very strongly defended and had lofty structures everywhere; there were beautiful gardens and tanks of clear water, and in it rainties from strange lands were collected. The inhabitants were well off, and there were families of great wealth; fruits and flowers were abundant, and sowing and reaping had their seasons. The people had a refined appearance and dressed in glossy silk attire, they were given to learning and the arts, and were clever and suggestive in their discourse; they were divided between orthodoxy and heterodoxy. There were above 100 Buddhist monasteries with more than 10,000 Brethren who were students of both 'Vehicles'. There were more than 200 Deva-Temples, and the non-Buddhists were several thousands in number"³.

The next Maukharī King we know of after Pūrṇavarman is Bhogavarman, but as we have seen he could not have been a powerful ruler; nor could he have ruled from Pāṭaliputra; for we know that after the death of Pūrṇavarman the Guptas of Malwa were transferred by Harsha to Magadha. In all likelihood, Bhogavarman, who was a feudatory of Ādityasena of Magadha, ruled also in some small corner of Magadha. That is why he is merely styled "illustrious" in the Nepāl inscriptions.

The imperial glory of the Maukhari dynasty was revived, however, by Yaśovarman, who secured the throne of Kanauj

¹ Legge, *Travels of Fa-Hien*, Ch. XVIII

² Cf. Smith, *J. R. A. S.*, 1908, pp. 769 ff.

³ Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, p. 340. It is strange that I-tsing, another Chinese pilgrim, who travelled in India between 673 and 687 A. D., and visited Kanauj, has not recorded what he saw there. This is perhaps because, on the death of the emperor Harsha, Kanauj for the first time ceased to be the capital of Upper India (Cf. Takakusu, *Records of the Buddhist Religion*, pp. liii-iv).

and the sovereignty of India. He has been attributed with the foundation of the town Yaśovarmapura, where he might also have transferred his capital for some time. But the *Rājataranginī* always speaks of Kanauj as his capital. With Yaśovarman the Maukharis came to a close. His family was uprooted by the Kāshmir King Lalitāditya, and none of its members could have succeeded him. As we have shown none of his immediate successors, Vajrāyudha, Indrāyudha and Chakrāyudha, could have been Maukharis, and they were succeeded in Kanauj by the dynasty of the Pratihāras.

The Coinage and the Chronology of the Maukharis

It is indeed a very teasing task to settle the chronology of the Maukharis, for the difficulties that beset the student are varied and numerous. The principal difficulties, however, are two. In the first instance most of the inscriptions of the Maukharis that are available for our perusal are undated, and therefore are of very little assistance in our attempt at determining the duration of the reigns of the various Maukhari kings. In the second place the coins of the Maukharis—we have coins only of the imperial Maukharis—though some of them are dated, do not say in which eras they are dated, and thus stubbornly refuse to give out their secret. We have therefore to make the best use of the scant evidence at hand to arrive at results which, though they appear more or less accurate, can be only provisional.

The history of the Maukharis extends from the third to the eighth century A. D., when Yaśovarman's defeat at the hands of Laṣitāditya of Kāshmir put a seal to the chequered and vicissitudinous existence of the Maukhari house. Yaśovarman is known to have lived in the first half of the eighth century. As we have already seen he despatched an embassy to the Chinese court in the year 731 A. D. Presumably such a mission would have been despatched not long after the accession of Yaśovarman, and so we may suppose that this prince ascended the throne of Kanauj between 726 and

731 A. D., in about 729 A. D. His contemporary Lalitāditya has been calculated, according to the evidence of the *Rājataranginī* and the inscriptions of the Pālas, to have reigned from 723 to 760 A. D.¹ The grandson of Lalitāditya, by name Jayāpīda, who reigned from 772-803 A. D.² is said to have vanquished in battle a Magadha king named Vajrāyudha, who, as we have said, was very likely the immediate successor of Yaśovarman. His defeat must have taken place either in or before 783 A. D.³, when we find another king Indrāyudha, in all probability again, the son of Vajrāyudha, on the throne of Kanauj⁴. Assuming that Vajrāyudha had a reign of about twenty-five years, we arrive at 758 as the last date of Yaśovarman. But this date would leave only two years for Lalitāditya, the conqueror of Yaśovarman, between his victory over the Kanauj Emperor and his death in 760 A. D., whilst we feel from the *Rājataranginī* that he survived Yaśovarman by more than two years, remembering the several conquests he effected and the numerous towns and shrines he built after his victory over Yaśovarman. Under these circumstances we might without much difficulty assign to Vajrāyudha a reign of thirty years, which would leave 753 as the last year of Yaśovarman's reign. A reign of thirty years is quite possible for Vajrāyudha, who was in all likelihood quite a young man and a *protégé* of the Kāshmir King when he was placed by him on the throne of Kanauj after the overthrow of Yaśovarman. The initial date, circa 729 A. D., which we have obtained for Yaśovarman may be confirmed by one important fact of his reign. Yaśovarman is said in the *Gaudavāho* to have defeated the King of Magadha. As it has already been shown, this Magadha King could have been none other than either Jivita

¹ Cunningham, *A. S. I. R.*, III, p. 135.

² Cf Hoernle, *J. R. A. S.*, 1905, p. 17.

³ The authority for the year 783 A. D. is the *Jaina Harivamsa*.

⁴ *Ibid* This Indrayudha was deposed in about 800 A. D. by Dharmapala who replaced a king named Chakrayudha, perhaps a brother or a son of Indrayudha himself, on the throne of Kanauj.

Gupta II or his son Jīvita Gupta II is the last member of the later Magadha Gupta line who is known to us, and he was the great grandson of Ādityasena who ruled till about 690 A. D. Jīvita Gupta's reign could therefore have begun in 730 A. D.¹ Yaśovarman must have marched against Magadha in about 732 A. D., when either Jīvita Gupta II or his son was on its throne.

Because the Gaudavāho does not record any advance on Kāshmir by King Yaśovarman of Kanauj, Hoernle is of opinion that the Yaśovarman coins recovered in Kāshmir do not belong to him. He rather attributes them to Yaśodharman of Mālwa though he is constrained to acknowledge that in this case the *va* has to be changed into *dha*. Of the particular variety to which these coins belong the first specimen was found together with a number of coins of different classes in the relic casket of the celebrated tope of Manikyala when it was opened by General Ventura in 1830². They are not at all uncommon; in fact fifty-seven were found in 1885 in the Siālkot District of the Punjāb³. As Smith admits, there is no doubt that they belonged to the Kāshmir series⁴. They resemble very much the issues of Durlabhaka (Pratapāditya II), who was reigning in about 700 A. D., and also those of Jayāpīda, who, as we have seen, came to the throne in 772 A. D., twelve years after the death of Lalitāditya. The names of the Kāshmir kings of this period are well known, and do not include any Yaśovarman⁵. Moreover, Smith observes that these coins from a numismatic point of view should be placed between the coinage of Pratapāditya II and Jayāpīda.

¹ As we shall see, Ādityasena seems to have enjoyed a long reign, circa 655-690 A. D. His successor Deva Gupta III therefore could not have occupied the throne for long.

² Cf. Prinsep, *Indian Antiquities*, I, pl. v, No. 9, and pl. xxxi, No. 3.

³ Proceedings, *J. A. S. B.*, 1888, p. 180.

⁴ Cf. *J. R. A. S.*, 1908, p. 783.

⁵ There was one Yasovarman who belonged to the royal family of Kashmir, but his date is too late in the ninth century, and, besides, he never mounted the throne (Cf. Dutt, *Rajatarangini*, I, p. 104).

The date thus arrived at agrees completely with that of the Kanauj Emperor, Yaśovarman (circa 529-553), and one feels that they should really be attributed to him⁴. But it is necessary to explain why the coins of Yaśovarman of Kanauj should have been struck in Kāśhmīr. Hoernle, as we have seen, objects that the Rājataranginī does not refer to Yaśovarman's sovereignty over Kāśhmīr; but obviously there is no difficulty here, for it is not strange that Kalhana should have left unmentioned the subjugation of Kāśhmīr by Yaśovarman previous to the Kanauj emperor's defeat and overthrow at the hands of his liege. Hoernle's second objection is that even Vākpatirāja, the court-poet of Yaśovarman, does not refer to any conquest of Kāśhmīr by his patron. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that the *digvijaya* described in the *Gaudavāho* might have been—in all probability it really was—accomplished in the early years of Yaśovarman's reign, whilst the subordination of the Kāśhmīr King might have been achieved some time later and after the composition of the *Gaudavāho*, as we have it. Or, for all we know, when Vākpatirāja asserts that his hero marched triumphantly defeating all enemies between the Narmadā and the Himālayas, and yet does not refer in particular to Kāśhmīr, he may mean to imply that the Kāśhmīr King by choice acquiesced in the sovereignty of Yaśovarman and became his subordinate ally. In either case it is possible that Lalitāditya was constrained by his overlord to strike coins in his name. Two circumstances, however, point to the possession of Kāśhmīr by Yaśovarman. The first is the embassy sent by him to China to solicit assistance from the Chinese government against the Arabs and the Tibetans. The second is the appellation 'Mārgapati, Udchhipati' given to Yaśovarman's minister in the Nālandā inscription. *Udchhipati* simply means 'the Lord

⁴ For a description and illustrations of these coins, cf. Smith, *Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum*, I, pp. 91, note, 265, 268; Rapson, *Indian Coins*, sec 112, pl. IV, No. 22, Cunningham, *Coins of Mediaeval India*, pl. III, No. 11; and Cunningham, *A. S. I. R.*, II, p. 159; III, p. 138.

of the North whist *Mārgapattī* as Dr Śaṣtri has explained means the Guardian of the Frontier Passes .

Before Yaśovarman the Maukharī prince of whom something at least is known is Bhogavarman . We have already seen that Bhogavarman was the son-in-law of Ādityasena of Magadha whose rule is known from the Shāhpur stone inscription to have extended to the year 672 A. D.². Mādhava Gupta, the father of Ādityasena, was still on the throne of Magadha in 647-8 A. D., soon after the death of Harsha. Ādityasena's reign may therefore be placed between circa 655 and 690 A. D. Bhogavarman is also known to have married his daughter to Śivadeva II of Nedāl, of whose reign and from whose inscriptions three dates are known to us — 725, 749 and 751 A. D.⁴. Jayadeva, the son of Śivadeva II and the grandson of Bhogavarman, is known to have been ruling in 759 A. D.⁵. From a perusal of these dates the following tentative chronology may be suggested:—

A. D. 655-690, reign of Ādityasena

„ „ 685, daughter of Ādityasena married to
Bhogavarman

„ „ 685-715, reign of Bhogavarman

„ „ 710, Vatsadevi married to Śivadeva II

„ „ 720-751, reign of Śivadeva II

„ „ 751- Jayadeva

Before Bhogavarman, King Pūrṇavarman reigned in Magadha. As we have said, Pūrṇavarman must have been raised to the throne of Magadha probably after the death of Rājyaśrī in about 612 A. D., when Harsha assumed the imperial title. In 619 A. D., Pūrṇavarman was undoubtedly

¹ E. I., XX, p. 41

² Fleet, *G. I.*, plate No. 42.

³ The end of Harsha's rule is determined from the Chinese historian Ma Tuan-lin, who speaks of an embassy sent to Magadha in 648 A. D., which found the Kanauj emperor dead Julien, *Melanges de Geographie Asiatique*, p. 164, gives 646 A. D. as the date of the departure of the embassy.

⁴ I. A., IX, pp. 174-7

⁵ I. A., IX, p. 181.

on the throne; for the Gauda King Śaśānka, who was alive when the Ganjam plates of 619 A. D. were inscribed, is said by Hiuen Tsiang to have died miserably when he heard of Pūrṇavarman's restoration of the Bodhi-tree¹. In 637 A. D., however, Pūrṇavarman does not appear to have been alive. Hiuen Tsiang who visited Magadha in 637-38 A. D., speaks of Pūrṇavarman as the last of the race of King Aśoka, which implies that Pūrṇavarman had died without leaving any successor. Moreover, the pilgrim does not make any allusion to a visit to Pūrṇavarman, and it would really be a very extraordinary circumstance for Hiuen Tsiang to have failed to visit Pūrṇavarman, the great patron of Buddhism, if the latter was alive when the pilgrim passed through the country. Pūrṇavarman's death must therefore have taken place somewhere between 619 and 637 A. D., in or about 628 A. D., after which Mādhava Gupta was entrusted with the government of Magadha.

We now pass on to the reign of Grahavarman, the brother-in-law of Harshavardhana. The concluding year of his reign is known to all, it is 606 A. D., the same year as that of the deaths of Prabhākaravardhana and Rājyavardhana and the accession of Harshavardhana. His marriage with Rājyaśrī, according to the narrative in the *Harsha Charita*, could not have taken place more than two years before his assassination by the Mālwa ruler. Moreover, it does not appear probable, as we have said, that Grahavarman's father Avantivarman was alive when the wedding took place, and we may reckon that Grahavarman had already ascended the throne a few years before he married Rājyaśrī. The following dates may therefore be suggested for Grahavarman:—

¹ Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, II, p 121. In Cunningham's *Ancient Geography of India*, p. 526, the beginning of the seventh century is assigned as the date for Sasanka's discreditable part in the affair of the Bodhi-tree. As we have seen, the Bodhi-tree was destroyed by Sasanka not on the occasion of his expedition to Kanauj, but some time later. The year 615 A. D. would perhaps indicate the correct date of its destruction.

600 A. D. Access on

604 A. D. Marriage with Rājyaśrī

606 A. D. Death at the hands of Deva Gupta

Deva Gupta, Kumāra Gupta, Mādhava Gupta, Rājyavardhana, Harshavardhana, and Bhāskaravarman were all contemporaries. The *Harsha Charita* tells us that at the time of Rājyaśrī's conception Rājyavardhana, the elder son, was "nearing his sixth year"¹, whilst Harsha, the younger brother, was in his second year, for he could "just manage five or six paces with the support of his nurse's fingers" and "tiny teeth were beginning to adorn his mouth"². The next year Rājyaśrī was born. There was therefore a difference of about four years between the two brothers, and about three years between Harsha and his sister. Kumāra Gupta, the Mālwa prince and companion of the Thānesar princes, was "in age about eighteen years"³ when he came to the Thānesar court in 603 A. D., shortly before the marriage of Rājyaśrī. Rājyavardhana, too, must have been of about the same age at that time, whilst Harsha and very likely Mādhava Gupta also were about fourteen years old, and Rājyaśrī eleven. Grahavarman, in all likelihood, was also coeval with Kumāra Gupta and Rājyavardhana. The following dates, therefore, though only tentative, could not be very far from correct. —

585 A. D. Births of Grahavarman, Kumāra Gupta
and Rājyavardhana

589 A. D. Births of Harshavardhana and Mādhava
Gupta

592 A. D. Birth of Rājyaśrī *

603 A. D. Arrival of Kumāra Gupta and Mādhava
Gupta at the Thānesar court.

That Harshavardhana was only about seventeen years of age when he became king is shown by the fact that he is called by Bāṇa a mere "boy" at the time of his accession⁴. Again,

¹ Bana, *Harsha Charita*, pp. 115-116

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 175, 239.

it is said of Rājyavardhana when he returned from his expedition against the Huṇas in 606 A. D. that his beard showed but "faint growth"¹, which means that he could not have been at that time more than twenty-one years old, which would be his age according to our chronology.

The year 606 A. D., which we have fixed upon as the date of Grahavarman's accession, must also be taken as the year of Avantivarman's demise. The date of Avantivarman's accession, however, is more difficult to gauge. Seventeen coins of his recovered at Bhittauri are the only clues we can work upon². Burn at first read three dates from these coins, 250, 57, and 71³. It is strange that some of the dates on Maukharī coins are in three digits, whilst others are in two digits. This strange circumstance has led some numismatists to adopt a new era for reading the two-digit figures. They call this the Maukharī era and reckon its beginning in 499 A. D., the year in which 3600 years of the *Kaliyuga* had been completed, which fact was so prominently brought to notice by Āryabhatta in his great astronomical work. To my mind, however, there is no need of reckoning these dates from a different era than the Gupta in which the three-figure dates have been read. What we have to do is merely to supply the hundred's digit which is missing by the figure 2. To come to the dates of Avantivarman, Burn himself feels it necessary to correct his reading 57 into 67, for if 57 be accepted it will be found that Śaivavarman's and Avantivarman's dates "overlap"⁴. The reading 250 of Burn has also been corrected by Dikshit⁵ into 260. The final readings of Avantivarman's dates would therefore be as follows.

260 G. S.	=	579 A. D.	••
(2) 67 G. S.	=	586 A. D.	
(2) 71 G. S.	=	590 A. D.	

¹ Bana, *Harsha Charita*, p. 166

² On six of these coins the dates are very doubtful, and from four they have disappeared.

³ *J. R. A. S.*, 1906, p. 849.

⁴ *Ibid*

⁵ Vide Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age* pp. 103-104 note

As the date 578 A. D. is obtained from one of Śarvavarman's coins, we may conclude that Śarvavarman's reign came to a close in 579 A. D., in which year Avantivarman ascended the Maukhari throne. If, however, the dates 250 and 57 are correct and cannot be changed to 260 and 67 respectively, it might be well supposed that Avantivarman, whose relationship with Śarvavarman as that of a son is not at all definitely known to us, had already set himself up as a rival ruler in some part of the country in 250 G. S. or 569 A. D. Nevertheless, he could not have mounted the ancestral Maukhari throne before 579 A. D., the year of Śarvavarman's death. The contemporaries of Avantivarman were Prabhākaravardhana, Mahāsena Gupta, and Susthitarman, the fathers respectively of Harsha, Madhava Gupta and Bhāskara-varman.

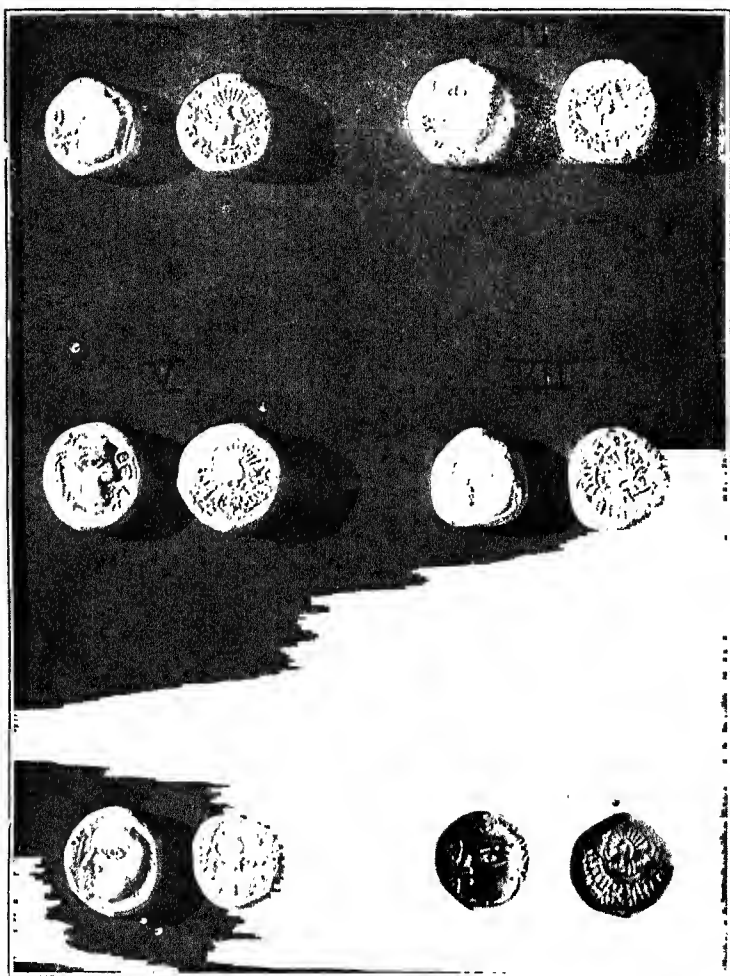
For the coins of Śarvavarman, different scholars give us different dates. Smith¹ reads 58, Burn² reads (2) 34 and (2) 3x, Brown³ follows the readings of Burn, whilst Dikshit⁴ reads 258, 259, 25x, and 58. It is only possible to accept the dates of Smith and Dikshit, for 234 G. S. which is equivalent to 553 A. D. does not agree with the date 554 of Īśānavarman as given by the Harāhā inscription. Nor does it agree with the other readings of Īśānavarman's coins, and it is not possible to explain how Śarvavarman could issue coins in his own name when his father was alive and was ruling the country. True, as it has been suggested before, Śarvavarman might have rebelled against his father in the last years of the latter's reign, and even usurped the throne from his brother Suryavarman, who, as it seems probable from the Harāhā inscription, was older than himself. But such a rebellion could not have taken place as early as 553 A. D., and therefore the reading 234 is evidently erroneous. Śarvavarman may therefore be reckoned to have ascended

¹ *J. A. S. B.*, 1894, p. 194.

² *J. R. A. S.*, 1906, p. 844.

³ *Catalogue of Coins of the Guptas, Maukharis, etc., in the Provincial Museum, Lucknow*, (1920), p. 30.

⁴ Vide Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*. pp. 103. 104.



8. Some Maukhari Coins.

Coin of Īśānavarman (Cat. No. 1).	Coin of Īśānavarman (Cat. No. 3).
Coin of Śarvavarman (Cat. No. 5).	Coin of Avantivarman (Cat. No. 7).
Coin of Avantivarman (Cat. No. 9).	Coin of Avantivarman (Cat. No. 10).

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